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THE COMPLETE

POLITICAL WORKS

OF

THOMAS PAINE,

SECRETARY TO THE COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, AND AUTHOR OF "COMMON SENSE," "THE CRISIS," "RIGHTS OF MAN," ETC.

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COMMON SENSE:

ADDRESSED TO THE

INHABITANTS OF AMERICA,

ON THE FOLLOWING INTERESTING SUBJECTS:

I. Of the Origin and Design of Government in general, with concise Remarks on the English Constitution.

II. Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession.

III. Thoughts on the Present State of American Affairs.

IV. Of the Present Ability of America, with some Miscellaneous Reflections.

To which is added an APPENDIX: together with an Address to the People called QUAKERS.

BY

THOMAS PAINE.

Author of "The Crisis," "Rights of Man," "Age of Reason," etc.

Man knows no master save creating heaven,
Or those whom choice and common good ordain.—THOMPSON.

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EXPLANATORY NOTICE.*

THE North American Republic consists of twenty-four regularly organized States, and an immense extent of territory not yet formed into States, which, with the exception of some mountain ridges, is wholly susceptible of cultivation. It contains upwards of two millions of square miles, and is therefore thirteen times as large as France, twenty-three times as large as England, and would, were it peopled as densely as these countries, contain FOUR HUNDRED MILLIONS OF PEOPLE. It is watered on its eastern, western, and part of its southern sides by the ocean, and on part of its northern frontier by immense lakes. It is intersected in all directions by magnificent rivers, and has more facilities for water conveyance than any other continental country; it abounds in mines and minerals, and produces every thing necessary for the sustenance and enjoyment of mankind.

The population of the United States has been several times doubled in periods of less than twenty-five years, it now contains upwards of twelve millions of people,

* This clear and concise statement of the origin of the American war for independence is from an edition of *Common Sense* published in 1848 by J. Watson, 3 Queen's Head Passage, Paternoster Row, London. At that time the English publishers were permitted to print Paine's political writings unmutilated, as they now appear, without molestation by the government: but the early editions of both *Common Sense* and the *Rights of Man* were issued in a very imperfect form to avoid prosecution; all adverse criticism of the king or parliament, of tyrants and tyranny, being sternly suppressed. The vacant lines in the pages of the edition of *Common Sense* published by J. Almon, opposite Burlington-house in Piccadilly, 1776, and the many suppressed passages in the *Rights of Man* published H. D. Symonds, Paternoster-Row, 1792, of J. S. Jordan, 166 Fleet-street, 1791, and many others, are all mute yet eloquent witnesses of the injustice and tyranny exercised by the British government in the 18th century.—*Am. Pub.*

and bids fair at no very distant period to be more populous and powerful than any nation ever was.

Such is the present state, and such the prospects of a nation originally settled by men who either fled from religious intolerance and persecution to seek peace in the wilderness,—by men whose notions of liberty were too high to permit them to endure the tyranny they were subjected to at home,—or by men who sought their fortunes as commercial speculators or cultivators of the land. From Britons thus circumstanced has sprung a people who have increased in number, wealth, and intelligence with a rapidity of which history furnishes no parallel.

From the time that the commerce of the North American Colonies became worth the notice of the British Government, it was put under the most pernicious and absurd restraints, for the supposed advantage of the mother country, and laws were occasionally passed here to regulate their internal affairs.

In the war which preceded the peace of 1762, the Colonists took a very decided part, and greatly contributed to the conquests made from the French. Canada, which had been taken from that people, was retained by the British, and Florida was ceded to us by Spain. Thus secured from attack by foreign neighbors, Great Britain and her Colonies were more than ever attached to each other. The Americans were proud of the land of their ancestors and gloried in their descent from Englishmen. This state of harmony was, however, of short duration. The unexampled expenses of the war required additional taxes to a large amount, and the difficulty this occasioned led the government in 1764 seriously to contemplate the levying of taxes in the colonies. This was objected to by the colonists, unless they were permitted to send representatives to the British Parliament; to this the government would not consent, and a dispute commenced which ended in the separation of the two countries.

Some at least if not all the colonies contended that they possessed every legislative power not surrendered by compact: whilst in Britain it was contended on the part of the government, that "Parliament possessed the power of binding them in all cases whatever."

The dispute became serious, but so contemptible was the power of the colonists considered in the eyes of the English government, that in a debate in the House of Commons, General Grant, who should have known better, declared that "with five regiments of infantry he would undertake to traverse the whole country and drive the inhabitants from one end of it to the other." This contempt was not only entertained by the government and its adherents, but by the people, who were eager to compel their American brethren to submission by force of arms, against which the voice of a few wise men was of no avail. The colonists continuing to refuse the unconditional submission demanded, recourse was had to arms, and on the night of the 18th of April, 1775, they were attacked by the king's troops at Lexington, and here the first American blood was spilt by their English brethren. The Americans repelled the aggression, appointed GEORGE WASHINGTON Commander-in-chief, and a desultory civil war desolated the colonies. The people were undecided in opinion, some were for submission, and others who deprecated the conduct of government, and publicly declared their detestation, disapproved of resistance as useless, and few were disposed to risk their lives and property in a contest of which none appeared able to foretell the consequences. The doctrine of independence was a novelty hitherto but slightly advocated by its friends, and they, from the want of numbers and the timidity always attendant on newly-started notions, were looked upon as rash and dangerous, or treacherous and designing men, more deserving of suspicion and censure than of applause and imitation.

It was in this crisis, this interval between fear and principle, that Thomas Paine, then unknown as a public character, published the pamphlet *Common Sense.** Taking a broader and longer view than his contemporaries, seeing the inevitable consequence of submission, the probable result of a declaration of independence, correctly appreciating the reasons which could be urged on either side, and pre-eminently possessing the power of clearly stating what he strongly conceived, he addressed himself to the Americans in language which every one could understand, and none could successfully controvert. This remarkable and inestimable production may be described from the anathemas of the enemies of liberty. It has received the highest possible praise from the pen of Cheetham, one of Thomas Paine's most venal and

* "At the close of the year 1775," says Calvin Blanchard in his *Life of Paine*, "when the American Revolution had progressed as far as the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill, John Adams, Benjamin Rush, Benjamin Franklin, and George Washington, had met together to read the terrible dispatches they had received. Having done which, they pause in gloom and silence. Presently Franklin speaks: 'What,' he asks, 'is to be the end of all this? Is it to obtain justice of Great Britain, to change the ministry, to soften a tax? Or is it for' —— He paused; the word *independence* yet choked the bravest throat that sought to utter it.

"At this critical moment, Paine enters. Franklin introduces him and he takes his seat. He well knows the cause of the prevailing gloom, and breaks the deep silence thus: 'These States of America must be independent of England. That is the only solution of this question!' They all rise to their feet at this political blasphemy. But, nothing daunted, he goes on; his eye lights up with patriotic fire as he paints the glorious destiny which America, considering her vast resources, ought to achieve, and adjures them to lend their influence to rescue the Western Continent from the absurd, unnatural, and unprogressive predicament of being governed by a small island, three thousand miles off. Washington leaped forward, and taking both his hands, besought him to publish these views in a book.

"Paine went to his room, seized his pen, lost sight of every other object, toiled incessantly, and in December, 1775, the work entitled *Common Sense*, which caused the Declaration of Independence, and brought both people and their leaders face to face with the work they had to accomplish, was sent forth on its mission. 'That book,' says Dr. Rush, 'burst forth from the press with an effect that has been rarely produced by types and paper, in any age or country.'

"'Have you seen the pamphlet, *Common Sense?*' asked Major General Lee, in a letter to Washington; 'I never saw such a masterly, irresistible performance. It will, if I mistake not, in concurrence with the transcendent folly and wickedness of the ministry, give the *coup-de-grace* to Great Britain. In short, I own myself convinced by the arguments, of the necessity of separation.'"

"The tribute of Paine's greatest enemy was in these words: "The cannon of Washington was not more formidable to the British than the pen of the author of *Common Sense*."—*Am. Pub.*

shameless calumniators, who thus characterizes the work :

"This pamphlet of forty-seven octavo pages, holding out relief by proposing INDEPENDENCE to an oppressed and despairing people, was published in January, 1776. Speaking a language which the colonists had felt, but not thought, its popularity, terrible in its consequences to the mother country, was unexampled in the history of the press. At first involving the colonists, it was thought, in the crime of rebellion, and pointing to a road leading inevitably to ruin, it was read with alarm and indignation, but when the reader, (and every body read it), recovering from the first shock, re-perused it, its arguments, ravishing his feelings and appealing to his pride, re-animated his hopes and satisfied his understanding, that *Common Sense*, backed by the resources and force of the colonies, poor and feeble as they were, could alone rescue them from the unqualified oppression with which they were threatened. The unknown author, in the moments of enthusiasm which succeeded, was hailed as an angel sent from heaven to save from all the horrors of slavery, by his timely, powerful, and unerring councils, a faithful but abused,—a brave but misrepresented people."

"When *Common Sense* arrived at Albany, the Convention of New York was sitting there. General Scott, a leading member, alarmed at the boldness and novelty of its arguments, mentioned his fears to several of his distinguished colleagues, and suggested a private meeting in the evening, for the purpose of writing an answer. They accordingly met, and Mr. McThesson read the pamphlet through. At first it was deemed necessary and expedient to answer it without delay, but casting about for the requisite arguments, they concluded to adjourn and meet again. In a few evenings they re-assembled, but so rapid was the change of opinion in the colonies at

large in favor of independence, that they agreed not to oppose it."

Dr. Gordon in his *History of the American Revolution*, writes thus, "The publications which have appeared have greatly promoted the spirit of independency, but no one so much as the pamphlet under the signature of *Common Sense*, written by Thomas Paine, an Englishman. Nothing could have been better timed * than this performance—it has produced astonishing effects."

Testimonies of this sort from friends and enemies could easily be multiplied, and proofs almost without end could be adduced to show how much the cause of mankind was promoted by Thomas Paine in thus assisting to lay the foundation of the American Republic,—the example of which will in time be followed by every people on the earth.

The principles maintained in *Common Sense* are applicable to all times, and to all mankind. They should be carefully studied by every one who is at all desirous to possess that information without which he must ever remain a slave at heart. †

* "Paine was the first to advise the Americans to assert their independence," says Richard Carlile in his *Life of Paine*. "This he did in his famous pamphlet, entitled *Common Sense*, which, for its consequences and rapid effect, was the most important production that ever issued from the press. This pamphlet appeared at the commencement of the year 1776, and electrified the minds of the oppressed Americans. They had not ventured to harbor the idea of independence, and they dreaded war so much as to be anxious for reconciliation with Britain. One incident which gave a stimulus to the pamphlet *Common Sense* was, that it happened to appear on the very day that the King of England's speech reached the United States, in which the Americans were denounced as rebels and traitors and in which speech it was asserted to be the right of the legislature of England to bind the Colonies in all cases whatsoever! Such menace and assertion as this could not fail to kindle the ire of the Americans, and *Common Sense* came forward to touch their feelings with the spirit of independence in the very nick of time."—*Am. Pub.*

† Paine's own opinion of *Common Sense* may be inferred from the fact, that previous to his death he directed that his body should be interred on his farm at New Rochelle, and a plain stone placed over his grave bearing this inscription:

THOMAS PAINE,

AUTHOR OF

COMMON SENSE.

INTRODUCTION.

PERHAPS the sentiments contained in the following pages are not *yet* sufficiently fashionable to procure them general favor; a long habit of not thinking a thing *wrong*, gives it a superficial appearance of being *right*, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defence of custom. But the tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than reason.

As a long and violent abuse of power is generally the means of calling the right of it in question, (and in matters too which might never have been thought of, had not the sufferers been aggravated into the inquiry,) and as the king of England hath undertaken in his *own right* to support the parliament in what he calls *theirs*, and as the good people of this country are grievously oppressed by the combination, they have an undoubted privilege to inquire into the pretensions of both, and equally to reject the usurpation of either.

In the following sheets, the author hath studiously avoided everything which is personal among ourselves. Compliments as well as censure to individuals make no part thereof. The wise and the worthy need not the triumph of a pamphlet: and those whose sentiments are

injudicious or unfriendly, will cease of themselves, unless too much pains are bestowed upon their conversion.

The cause of America is, in a great measure, the cause of all mankind. Many circumstances have, and will arise, which are not local, but universal, and through which the principles of all lovers of mankind are affected, and in the event of which their affections are interested. The laying a country desolate with fire and sword, declaring war against the natural rights of all mankind, and extirpating the defenders thereof from the face of the earth, is the concern of every man to whom nature hath given the power of feeling ; of which class, regardless of party censure, is

THE AUTHOR.

PHILADELPHIA, *February 14, 1776.*

COMMON SENSE.

OF THE ORIGIN AND DESIGN OF GOVERNMENT IN GENERAL, WITH CONCISE REMARKS ON THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION.

SOME writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness *positively*, by uniting our affections; the latter *negatively*, by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last is a punisher.

Society in every state is a blessing, but government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil; in its worst state, an intolerable one; for when we suffer, or are exposed to the same miseries *by a government*, which we might expect in a country *without government*, our calamity is heightened by reflecting that we furnish the means by which we suffer. Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence: the palaces of kings are built on the ruins of the bowers of paradise. For, were the impulses of conscience clear, uniform, and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other lawgiver; but that not being the case, he finds it necessary to surrender up a part of his property to furnish means for the protection of the rest; and this he is

induced to do by the same prudence which, in every other case, advises him out of two evils to choose the least. *Wherefore*, security being the true design and end of government, it unanswerably follows, that whatever *form* thereof appears most likely to ensure it to us with the least expense and greatest benefit, is preferable to all others.

In order to give a clear and just idea of the design and end of government, let us suppose a small number of persons settled in some sequestered part of the earth, unconnected with the rest: they will then represent the first peopling of any country, or of the world. In this state of natural liberty, society will be their first thought. A thousand motives will excite them thereto; the strength of one man is so unequal to his wants, and his mind so unfitted for perpetual solitude, that he is soon obliged to seek assistance and relief of another, who in his turn requires the same. Four or five united would be able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the midst of a wilderness; but *one* man might labor out the common period of life without accomplishing anything: when he had felled his timber he could not remove it, nor erect it after it was removed; hunger in the mean time would urge him from his work, and every different want call him a different way. Disease, nay even misfortune, would be death; for though neither might be mortal, yet either would disable him from living, and reduce him to a state in which he might rather be said to perish than to die.

Thus necessity, like a gravitating power, would soon form our newly-arrived emigrants into society, the reciprocal blessings of which would supersede and render the obligations of law and government unnecessary while they remained perfectly just to each other: but as nothing but heaven is impregnable to vice, it will unavoidably happen, that in proportion as they surmount

the first difficulties of emigration, which bound them together in a common cause, they will begin to relax in their duty and attachment to each other; and this remissness will point out the necessity of establishing some form of government to supply the defect of moral virtue.

Some convenient tree will afford them a State-House, under the branches of which the whole colony may assemble to deliberate on public matters. It is more than probable that their first laws will have the title only of *Regulations*, and be enforced by no other penalty than public disesteem. In this first parliament every man, by natural right, will have a seat.

But as the colony increases, the public concerns will increase likewise, and the distance at which the members may be separated, will render it too inconvenient for all of them to meet on every occasion as at first, when their number was small, their habitations near, and the public concerns few and trifling. This will point out the convenience of their consenting to leave the legislative part to be managed by a select number chosen from the whole body, who are supposed to have the same concerns at stake which those have who appointed them, and who will act in the same manner as the whole body would were they present. If the colony continue increasing, it will become necessary to augment the number of representatives, and that the interest of every part of the colony may be attended to, it will be found best to divide the whole into convenient parts, each part sending its proper number; and that the *elected* might never form to themselves an interest separate from the *electors*, prudence will point out the propriety of having elections often; because as the *elected* might by that means return and mix again with the general body of the *electors* in a few months, their fidelity to the public will be secured by the prudent reflection of not making a rod for themselves. And as this frequent inter-

change will establish a common interest with every part of the community, they will mutually and naturally support each other, and on this (not on the unmeaning name of King) depends the *strength of government and the happiness of the governed.*

Here, then, is the origin and rise of government; namely, a mode rendered necessary by the inability of moral virtue to govern the world; here too is the design and end of government, viz., freedom and security. And however our eyes may be dazzled with show, or our ears deceived by sound; however prejudice may warp our wills, or interest darken our understanding; the simple voice of nature and reason will say, it is right.

I draw my idea of the form of government from a principle in nature, which no art can overturn, viz., that the more simple anything is, the less liable it is to be disordered, and the easier repaired when disordered; and with this maxim in view, I offer a few remarks on the so much boasted constitution of England. That it was noble for the dark and slavish times in which it was erected, is granted. When the world was overrun with tyranny, the least remove therefrom was a glorious rescue. But that it is imperfect, subject to convulsions, and incapable of producing what it seems to promise, is easily demonstrated.

Absolute governments, (though the disgrace of human nature), have this advantage with them, that they are simple; if the people suffer, they know the head from which their suffering springs, they know likewise the remedy, and are not bewildered by a variety of causes and cures. But the constitution of England is so exceedingly complex, that the nation may suffer for years together without being able to discover in which part the fault lies; some will say in one and some in another, and every political physician will advise a different medicine.

I know it is difficult to get over local or long standing prejudices, yet if we will suffer ourselves to examine the component parts of the English constitution, we shall find them to be the base remains of two ancient tyrannies, compounded with some new republican materials.

First.—The remains of monarchical tyranny in the person of the king.

Secondly.—The remains of aristocratical tyranny in the persons of the peers.

Thirdly.—The new republican materials in the persons of the commons, on whose virtue depends the freedom of England.

The two first, by being hereditary, are independent of the people; wherefore in a *constitutional sense* they contribute nothing towards the freedom of the state.

To say that the constitution of England is a *union* of three powers reciprocally *checking* each other, is farcical; either the words have no meaning, or they are flat contradictions.

To say that the commons is a check upon the king, presupposes two things:

First.—That the king is not to be trusted without being looked after, or in other words, that a thirst for absolute power is the natural disease of monarchy.

Secondly.—That the commons, by being appointed for that purpose, are either wiser or more worthy of confidence than the crown.

But as the same constitution which gives the commons a power to check the king by withholding the supplies, gives afterwards the king a power to check the commons by empowering him to reject their other bills, it again supposes that the king is wiser than those whom it has already supposed to be wiser than him. A mere absurdity!

There is something exceedingly ridiculous in the composition of monarchy; it first excludes a man from

the means of information, yet empowers him to act in cases where the highest judgment is required. The state of a king shuts him from the world, yet the business of a king requires him to know it thoroughly; wherefore the different parts, by unnaturally opposing and destroying each other, prove the whole character to be absurd and useless.

Some writers have explained the English constitution thus: The king, say they, is one, the people another; the peers are a house in behalf of the king, the commons in behalf of the people. But this hath all the distinctions of a house divided against itself; and though the expressions be pleasantly arranged, yet when examined, they appear idle and ambiguous; and it will always happen, that the nicest construction that words are capable of, when applied to the description of something which either cannot exist or is too incomprehensible to be within the compass of description, will be words of sound only, and though they may amuse the ear, they cannot inform the mind, for this explanation includes a previous question, viz. *How came the king by a power which the people are afraid to trust, and always obliged to check?* Such a power could not be the gift of a wise people, neither can any power, *which needs checking*, be from God; yet the provision, which the constitution makes, supposes such a power to exist.

But the provision is unequal to the task; the means either cannot or will not accomplish the end, and the whole affair is a *felo de se;* for as the greater weight will always carry up the less, and as all the wheels of a machine are put in motion by one, it only remains to know which power in the constitution has the most weight, for that will govern; and though the others, or a part of them, may clog, or, as the phrase is, check the rapidity of its motion, yet so long as they cannot stop it, their endeavors will be ineffectual; the first

moving power will at last have its way, and what it wants in speed, is supplied by time.

That the crown is this overbearing part in the English constitution, needs not be mentioned, and that it derives its whole consequence merely from being the giver of places and pensions, is self evident; wherefore, though we have been wise enough to shut and lock a door against absolute monarchy, we at the same time have been foolish enough to put the crown in possession of the key.

The prejudice of Englishmen in favor of their own government by kings, lords and commons, arises as much or more from national pride than reason. Individuals are undoubtedly safer in England than in some other countries, but the *will* of a king is as much the *law* of the land in Britain as in France, with this difference, that instead of proceeding directly from his mouth, it is handed to the people under the more formidable shape of an act of parliament. For the fate of Charles the First hath only made kings more subtle—not more just.

Wherefore, laying aside all national pride and prejudice in favor of modes and forms, the plain truth is, that *it is wholly owing to the constitution of the people, and not to the constitution of the government*, that the crown is not as oppressive in England as in Turkey.

An inquiry into the *constitutional errors* in the English form of government is at this time highly necessary; for as we are never in a proper condition of doing justice to others, while we continue under the influence of some leading partiality, so neither are we capable of doing it to ourselves while we remain fettered by any obstinate prejudice. And as a man who is attached to a prostitute is unfitted to choose or judge of a wife, so any prepossession in favor of a rotten constitution of government will disable us from discerning a good one.

Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession.

MANKIND being originally equals in the order of creation, the equality could only be destroyed by some subsequent circumstances; the distinctions of rich and poor, may in a great measure be accounted for, and that without having recourse to the harsh ill-sounding names of oppression and avarice. Oppression is often the *consequence*, but seldom or never the *means* of riches; and though avarice will preserve a man from being necessitously poor, it generally makes him too timorous to become wealthy.

But there is another and greater distinction, for which no truly natural or religious reason can be assigned, and that is, the distinction of men into KINGS and SUBJECTS. Male and female are the distinctions of nature, good and bad the distinction of heaven; but how a race of men came into the world so exalted above the rest, and distinguished like some new species, is worth enquiring into, and whether they are the means of happiness or of misery to mankind.

In the early ages of the world, according to the scripture chronology, there were no kings; the consequence of which was, there were no wars: it is the pride of kings which throws mankind into confusion. Holland without a king hath enjoyed more peace for this last century than any of the monarchical governments in Europe. Antiquity favors the same remark; for the quiet and rural lives of the first patriarchs hath a happy something in them, which vanishes away when we come to the history of Jewish royalty.

Government by kings was first introduced into the world by the Heathens, from whom the children of Israel copied the custom. It was the most prosperous invention the Devil ever set on foot for the promotion of idolatry. The Heathens paid divine honors to their deceased kings, and the Christian world hath improved on the plan, by doing the same to their living ones. How impious is the title of *sacred majesty* applied to a worm who in the midst of his splendor is crumbling into dust!

As the exalting one man so greatly above the rest, cannot be justified on the equal rights of nature, so neither can it be defended on the authority of scripture; for the will of the Almighty, as declared by Gideon and the prophet Samuel, expressly disapproves of the government by kings. All anti-monarchical parts of scripture have been very smoothly glossed over in monarchical governments, but they undoubtedly merit the attention of countries which have their governments yet to form. *Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's* is the scripture doctrine of courts, yet it is no support of monarchical government, for the Jews at that time were without a king and in a state of vassalage to the Romans.

Near three thousand years passed away from the Mosaic account of the creation before the Jews, under a national delusion, requested a king. Till then their form of government (except in extraordinary cases where the Almighty interposed) was a kind of republic, administered by a judge and the elders of the tribe. Kings they had none, and it was held sinful to acknowledge any being under that title but the Lord of Hosts. And when a man seriously reflects on the idolatrous homage which is paid to the persons of kings he need not wonder that the Almighty, ever jealous of his honor, should disapprove a form of government which so impiously invades the prerogative of heaven.

Monarchy is ranked in scripture as one of the sins of the Jews, for which a curse in reserve is denounced against them. The history of that transaction is worth attending to.

The children of Israel being oppressed by the Midianites, Gideon marched against them with a small army, and victory, through the divine interposition, decided in his favor. The Jews, elate with success, and attributing it to the generalship of Gideon, proposed making him a king, saying, *Rule thou over us, thou and thy son, and thy son's son.* Here was temptation in its fullest extent; not a kingdom only, but a hereditary one, but Gideon in the piety of his soul replied, *I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you,* THE LORD SHALL RULE OVER YOU. Words need not be more explicit; Gideon doth not *decline* the honor, but denieth their right to give it; neither doth he compliment them with invented declarations of his thanks, but in the positive style of a Prophet charges them with disaffection to their proper Sovereign, the King of Heaven.

About one hundred years after this, they fell again into the same error. The hankering which the Jews had for the idolatrous customs of the Heathens, is something exceedingly unaccountable; but so it was, that laying hold of the misconduct of Samuel's two sons, who were intrusted with some secular concerns, they came in an abrupt and clamorous manner to Samuel, saying, *Behold thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways, now make us a king to judge us like all the other nations.* And here we cannot but observe that their motives were bad, viz., that they might be *like* unto other nations, *i. e.*, the Heathen, whereas their true glory lay in being as much *unlike* them as possible. *But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, Give us a king to judge us; and Samuel prayed unto the Lord, and the Lord said unto Samuel, Harken unto the voice of the people in all that*

they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, THAT I SHOULD NOT REIGN OVER THEM. *According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even unto this day; wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other Gods; so do they also unto thee. Now therefore harken unto their voice, howbeit, protest solemnly unto them, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them, i. e.,* not of any particular king, but the general manner of the kings of the earth, whom Israel was so eagerly copying after. And notwithstanding the great distance of time and difference of manners, the character is still in fashion. *And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people, that asked of him a king. And he said, This shall be the manner of the king that shall reign over you; he will take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen, and some shall run before his chariots* (this description agrees with the present mode of impressing men) *and he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties and will set them to ear his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots; and he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks and to be bakers* (this describes the expense and luxury as well as the oppression of kings) *and he will take your fields and your olive yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants; and he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give them to his officers and to his servants* (by which we see that bribery, corruption, and favoritism, are the standing vices of kings) *and he will take the tenth of your men servants, and your maid servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work; and he will take the tenth of your sheep, and ye shall be his servants, and ye shall cry out in that day because of*

your king which ye shall have chosen, AND THE LORD WILL NOT HEAR YOU IN THAT DAY. This accounts for the continuation of monarchy ; neither do the characters of the few good kings which have lived since, either sanctify the title, or blot out the sinfulness of the origin ; the high encomium given of David takes no notice of him *officially as a king*, but only as a *man* after God's own heart. *Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel, and they said, Nay, but we will have a king over us, that we may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us, and go out before us and fight our battles.* Samuel continued to reason with them, but to no purpose ; he set before them their ingratitude, but all would not avail ; and seeing them fully bent on their folly, he cried out, *I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain* (which was then a punishment, being in the time of wheat harvest) *that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great which ye have done in the sight of the Lord*, IN ASKING YOU A KING. *So Samuel called unto the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day, and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God that we die not, for* WE HAVE ADDED UNTO OUR SINS THIS EVIL, TO ASK A KING. These portions of scripture are direct and positive. They admit of no equivocal construction. That the Almighty hath here entered his protest against monarchical government is true, or the scripture is false. And a man hath good reason to believe, that there is as much of kingcraft as priestcraft in withholding the scripture from the public in Popish countries. For monarchy in every instance is the Popery of government.

To the evil of monarchy we have added that of hereditary succession ; and as the first is a degradation and lessening of ourselves, so the second, claimed as a matter

of right, is an insult and imposition on posterity. For all men being originally equals, no *one* by *birth* could have a right to set up his own family in perpetual preference to all others forever, and though himself might deserve *some* decent degree of honors of his contemporaries, yet his descendants might be far too unworthy to inherit them. One of the strongest *natural* proofs of the folly of hereditary right of kings, is that nature disapproves it, otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule by giving mankind an *ass for a lion.*

Secondly, as no man at first could possess any other public honors than were bestowed upon him, so the givers of those honors could have no power to give away the right of posterity, and though they might say, "We choose you for *our* head," they could not, without manifest injustice to their children, say, "that your children and your children's children shall *reign* over *ours* for *ever.*" Because such an unwise, unjust, unnatural compact might, perhaps, in the next succession put them under the government of a rogue or a fool. Most wise men in their private sentiments have ever treated hereditary right with contempt; yet it is one of those evils, which when once established is not easily removed; many submit from fear, others from superstition, and the more powerful part shares with the king the plunder of the rest.

This is supposing the present race of kings in the world to have had an honorable origin; whereas it is more than probable, that, could we take off the dark covering of antiquity and trace them to their first rise, we should find the first of them nothing better than the principal ruffian of some restless gang, whose savage manners or pre-eminence in subtility obtained him the title of chief among plunderers; and who by increasing in power, and extending his depredations, overawed the quiet and defenceless to purchase their safety by frequent contribu-

tions. Yet his electors could have no idea of giving hereditary right to his descendants, because such a perpetual exclusion of themselves was incompatible with the free and unrestrained principles they professed to live by. Wherefore, hereditary succession in the early ages of monarchy could not take place as a matter of claim, but as something casual or complimental; but as few or no records were extant in those days, and traditionary history is stuffed with fables, it was very easy after the lapse of a few generations, to trump up some superstitious tale, conveniently timed, Mahomet like, to cram hereditary rights down the throats of the vulgar. Perhaps the disorders which threatened, or seemed to threaten, on the decease of a leader, and the choice of a new one (for elections among ruffians could not be very orderly) induced many at first to favor hereditary pretensions; by which means it happened, as it hath happened since, that what at first was submitted to as a convenience, was afterwards claimed as a right.

England, since the conquest, hath known some good monarchs, but groaned beneath a much larger number of bad ones; yet no man in his senses can say that their claim under William the Conqueror is a very honorable one. A French bastard, landing with an armed banditti, and establishing himself king of England against the consent of the natives, is in plain terms a very paltry rascally original. It certainly hath no divinity in it. However, it is needless to spend much time in exposing the folly of hereditary right, if there are any so weak as to believe it, let them promiscuously worship the ass and the lion, and welcome. I shall neither copy their humility nor disturb their devotion.

Yet I should be glad to ask, how they suppose kings came at first? The question admits but of three answers, viz., either by lot, by election, or by usurpation. If the first king was taken by lot, it establishes a precedent for

the next, which excludes hereditary succession. Saul was by lot, yet the succession was not hereditary, neither does it appear from that transaction that there was any intention it ever should be. If the first king of any country was by election, that likewise establishes a precedent for the next; for to say, that the right of all future generations is taken away, by the act of the first electors, in their choice not only of a king, but of a family of kings forever, hath no parallel in or out of scripture but the doctrine of original sin, which supposes the free will of all men lost in Adam; and from such comparison, and it will admit of no other, hereditary succession can derive no glory. For as in Adam all sinned, and as in the first electors all men obeyed; as in the one all mankind were subjected to Satan, and in the other to sovereignty; as our innocence was lost in the first, and our authority in the last; and as both disable us from re-assuming some former state and privilege, it unanswerably follows that original sin and hereditary succession are parallels. Dishonorable rank! Inglorious connection! Yet the most subtile sophist cannot produce a juster simile.

As to usurpation, no man can be so hardy as to defend it; and that William the Conqueror was an usurper is a fact not to be contradicted. The plain truth is, that the antiquity of English monarchy will not bear looking into.

But it is not so much the absurdity as the evil of hereditary succession which concerns mankind. Did it ensure a race of good and wise men it would have the seal of divine authority, but as it opens a door to the *foolish*, the *wicked*, and the *improper*, it hath in it the nature of oppression. Men who look upon themselves born to reign, and others to obey, soon grow insolent; selected from the rest of mankind, their minds are early poisoned by importance; and the world they act in differs so materially from the world at large, that they have but

little opportunity of knowing its true interests, and when they succeed to the government are frequently the most ignorant and unfit of any throughout the dominions.

Another evil which attends hereditary succession is, that the throne is subject to be possessed by a minor at any age; all which time the regency under the cover of a king, have every opportunity and inducement to betray their trust. The same national misfortune happens, when a king, worn out with age and infirmity, enters the last stage of human weakness. In both these cases the public becomes the prey of every miscreant who can tamper successfully with the follies either of age or infancy.

The most plausible plea, which hath ever been offered in favor of hereditary succession is, that it preserves a nation from civil wars; and were this true, it would be weighty; whereas, it is the most bare-faced falsity ever imposed upon mankind. The whole history of England disowns the fact. Thirty kings and two minors have reigned in that distracted kingdom since the conquest, in which time there have been (including the revolution) no less than eight civil wars and nineteen rebellions. Wherefore, instead of making for peace, it makes against it, and destroys the very foundation it seems to stand on.

The contest for monarchy and succession, between the houses of York and Lancaster, laid England in a scene of blood for many years. Twelve pitched battles, besides skirmishes and sieges, were fought between Henry and Edward, twice was Henry prisoner to Edward, who in his turn was prisoner to Henry. And so uncertain is the fate of war and the temper of a nation, when nothing but personal matters are the ground of a quarrel, that Henry was taken in triumph from a prison to a palace, and Edward obliged to fly from a palace to a foreign land; yet, as sudden transitions of temper are seldom lasting, Henry in his turn was driven from the throne,

and Edward recalled to succeed him. The parliament always following the strongest side.

This contest began in the reign of Henry the Sixth, and was not entirely extinguished till Henry the Seventh, in whom the families were united. Including a period of sixty-seven years, viz., from 1422 to 1489.

In short, monarchy and succession have laid, not this or that kingdom only, but the world in blood and ashes. 'Tis a form of government which the word of God bears testimony against, and blood will attend it.

If we enquire into the business of a king, we shall find (and in some countries they have none) that after sauntering away their lives without pleasure to themselves or advantage to the nation, they withdraw from the scene, and leave their successors to tread the same useless and idle round. In absolute monarchies the whole weight of business, civil and military, lies on the king; the children of Israel in their request for a king urged this plea, "that he may judge us, and go out before us and fight our battles." But in countries where he is neither a judge nor a general, as in England, a man would be puzzled to know what *is* his business.

The nearer any government approaches to a republic, the less business there is for a king. It is somewhat difficult to find a proper name for the government of England. Sir William Meredith calls it a republic; but in its present state it is unworthy of the name, because the corrupt influence of the crown, by having all the places at its disposal, hath so effectually swallowed up the power, and eaten out the virtue of the house of commons (the republican part in the constitution) that the government of England is nearly as monarchical as that of France or Spain. Men fall out with names without understanding them. For it is the republican and not the monarchical part of the constitution of England which Englishmen glory in, viz., the liberty of choosing

a house of commons from out of their own body—and it is easy to see that when republican virtue fails, slavery ensues. Why is the constitution of England sickly, but because monarchy hath poisoned the republic, the crown hath engrossed the commons?

In England a king hath little more to do than to make war and give away places; which, in plain terms, is to impoverish the nation and set it together by the ears. A pretty business indeed for a man to be allowed eight hundred thousand sterling a year for, and worshiped into the bargain! Of more worth is one honest man to society, and in the sight of God, than all the crowned ruffians that ever lived.

Thoughts on the Present State of American Affairs.

In the following pages I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense; and have no other preliminaries to settle with the reader, than that he will divest himself of prejudice and prepossession, and suffer his reason and his feelings to determine for themselves; that he will put *on*, or rather that he will not put *off* the true character of a man, and generously enlarge his views beyond the present day.

Volumes have been written on the subject of the struggle between England and America. Men of all ranks have embarked in the controversy, from different motives, and with various designs: but all have been ineffectual, and the period of debate is closed. Arms, as a last resource, must decide the contest; the appeal was the choice of the king, and the continent hath accepted the challenge.

It has been reported of the late Mr. Pelham (who, though an able minister was not without his faults) that on his being attacked in the house of commons on the score that his measures were only of a temporary kind, replied, "*they will last my time.*" Should a thought so fatal and unmanly possess the colonies in the present contest, the name of ancestors will be remembered by future generations with detestation.

The sun never shone on a cause of greater worth. 'Tis not the affair of a city, a county, a province, or a kingdom, but of a continent — of at least one-eighth part of the habitable globe. 'Tis not the concern of a day, a

year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in the contest, and will be more or less affected even to the end of time, by the proceedings now. Now is the seed-time of continental union, faith and honor. The least fracture now will be like a name engraved with the point of a pin on the tender rind of a young oak; the wound will enlarge with the tree, and posterity read it in full grown characters.

By referring the matter from argument to arms, a new era for politics is struck; a new method of thinking hath arisen. All plans, proposals, &c., prior to the nineteenth of April, *i. e.*, to the commencement of hostilities, are like the almanacs of the last year; which, though proper then, are superseded and useless now. Whatever was advanced by the advocates on either side of the question then, terminated in one and the same point, viz., a union with Great Britain; the only difference between the parties was the method of effecting it; the one proposing force, the other friendship; but it hath so far happened that the first hath failed, and the second hath withdrawn her influence.

As much hath been said of the advantages of reconciliation, which, like an agreeable dream, hath passed away and left us as we were, it is but right that we should examine the contrary side of the argument, and enquire into some of the many material injuries which these colonies sustain, and always will sustain, by being connected with and dependant on Great Britain. To examine that connection and dependance on the principles of nature and common sense; to see what we have to trust to, if separated, and what we are to expect, if dependant.

I have heard it asserted by some, that as America hath flourished under her former connection with Great Britain, that the same connection is necessary towards her future happiness, and will always have the same effect. Nothing

can be more fallacious than this kind of argument. We may as well assert that because a child has thriven upon milk, that it is never to have meat, or that the first twenty years of our lives is to become a precedent for the next twenty. But even this is admitting more than is true, for I answer roundly, that America would have flourished as much, and probably much more, had no European power had anything to do with her. The commerce, by which she hath enriched herself, are the necessaries of life, and will always have a market while eating is the custom of Europe.

But she has protected us, say some. That she hath engrossed us is true, and defended the continent at our expense as well as her own, is admitted, and she would have defended Turkey from the same motives, viz., for the sake of trade and dominion.

Alas! we have been long led away by ancient prejudices, and made large sacrifices to superstition. We have boasted the protection of Great Britain, without considering that her motive was *interest*, not *attachment;* and that she did not protect us from *our enemies* on *our account*, but from *her enemies* on *her own account*, from those who had no quarrel with us on any *other account*, but who will always be our enemies on the *same account.* Let Britain waive her pretentions to the continent, or the continent throw off the dependance, and we should be at peace with France and Spain, were they at war with Britain. The miseries of Hanover last war, ought to warn us against connections.

It hath lately been asserted in parliament, that the colonies have no relation to each other but through the parent country, *i. e.*, that Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, and so on for the rest, are sister colonies by the way of England; this is certainly a very round-about way of proving relationship, but it is the nearest and only true way of proving enemyship, if I may so call it. France

and Spain never were, nor perhaps ever will be our enemies as *Americans*, but as our being the *subjects of Great Britain.*

But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upon their families; wherefore, the assertion, if true, turns to her reproach; but it happens not to be true, or only partly so, and the phrase *parent* or *mother country* hath been jesuitically adopted by the king and his parasites, with a low papistical design of gaining an unfair bias on the credulous weakness of our minds. Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America. This new world hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from *every part* of Europe. Hither have they fled, not from the tender embraces of a mother, but from the cruelty of the monster; and it is so far true of England, that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home, pursues their descendants still.

In this extensive quarter of the globe, we forget the narrow limits of three hundred and sixty miles (the extent of England) and carry our friendship on a larger scale; we claim brotherhood with every European Christian, and triumph in the generosity of the sentiment.

It is pleasant to observe by what regular gradations we surmount the force of local prejudice, as we enlarge our acquaintance with the world. A man born in any town in England divided into parishes, will naturally associate most with his fellow parishioners (because their interests in many cases will be common) and distinguish him by the name of *neighbor;* if he meet him but a few miles from home, he drops the narrow idea of a street, and salutes him by the name of *townsman;* if he travel out of the county, and meets him in any other, he forgets the

minor divisions of street and town, and calls him *countryman*, *i. e.*, *countyman;* but if in their foreign excursions they should associate in France or any other part of *Europe*, their local remembrance would be enlarged into that of *Englishmen*. And, by a just parity of reasoning, all Europeans meeting in America, or any other quarter of the globe, are *countrymen;* for England, Holland, Germany, or Sweden, when compared with the whole, stand in the same places on a larger scale, which the division of street, town and county do on the smaller ones; distinctions too limited for continental minds. Not one-third of the inhabitants, even of this province, are of English descent. Wherefore, I reprobate the phrase of parent or mother country applied to England only, as being false, selfish, narrow and ungenerous.

But admitting that we were all of English descent, what does it amount to? Nothing. Britain, being now an open enemy, extinguishes every other name and title; and to say that reconciliation is our duty, is truly farcical. The first king of England, of the present line (William the Conqueror) was a Frenchman, and half the peers of England are descendants from the same country; wherefore, by the same method of reasoning, England ought to be governed by France.

Much hath been said of the united strength of Britain and the colonies, that in conjunction they might bid defiance to the world. But this is mere presumption; the fate of war is uncertain, neither do the expressions mean anything; for this continent would never suffer itself to be drained of inhabitants, to support the British arms in either Asia, Africa, or Europe.

Besides, what have we to do with setting the world at defiance? Our plan is commerce, and that, well attended to, will secure us the peace and friendship of all Europe; because it is the interest of all Europe to have America a *free port*. Her trade will always be a protection, and

her barrenness of gold and silver secure her from invaders.

I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation, to show a single advantage that this continent can reap by being connected with Great Britain. I repeat the challenge; not a single advantage is derived. Our corn will fetch its price in any market in Europe, and our imported goods must be paid for, buy them where we will.

But the injuries and disadvantages we sustain by that connection are without number, and our duty to mankind at large, as well as to ourselves, instructs us to renounce the alliance; because any submission to or dependance on Great Britain tends directly to involve this continent in European wars and quarrels; and sets us at variance with nations who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom we have neither anger nor complaint. As Europe is our market for trade, we ought to form no partial connection with any part of it. It is the true interest of America to steer clear of European contentions, which she never can do while, by her dependance on Britain, she is made the make-weight in the scale of British politics.

Europe is too thickly planted with kingdoms to be long at peace, and whenever a war breaks out between England and any foreign power, the trade of America goes to ruin *because of her connection with Britain.* The next war may not turn out like the last, and should it not, the advocates for reconciliation now will be wishing for separation then, because neutrality in that case, would be a safer convoy than a man of war. Everything that is right or natural pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, *'tis time to part.* Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America is a strong and natural proof that the authority of the one over the other was never the design of heaven. The time likewise at which the conti-

nent was discovered adds weight to the argument, and the manner in which it was peopled increases the force of it. The reformation was preceded by the discovery of America, as if the Almighty graciously meant to open a sanctuary to the persecuted in future years, when home should afford neither friendship nor safety.

The authority of Great Britain over this continent is a form of government which sooner or later must have an end ; and a serious mind can draw no true pleasure by looking forward under the painful and positive conviction, that what he calls "the present constitution" is merely temporary. As parents, we can have no joy, knowing that this *government* is not sufficiently lasting to ensure anything which we may bequeath to posterity, and by a plain method of argument, as we are running the next generation into debt, we ought to do the work of it, otherwise we use them meanly and pitifully. In order to discover the line of our duty rightly, we should take our children in our hand, and fix our station a few years further into life ; that eminence will present a prospect which a few present fears and prejudices conceal from our sight.

Though I would carefully avoid giving unnecessary offense, yet I am inclined to believe, that all those who espouse the doctrine of reconciliation may be included within the following descriptions :

Interested men, who are not to be trusted ; weak men, who *cannot* see ; prejudiced men, who *will not* see ; and a certain set of moderate men who think better of the European world than it deserves ; and this last class, by an ill-judged deliberation, will be the cause of more calamities to this continent than all the other three.

It is the good fortune of many to live distant from the scene of sorrow ; the evil is not sufficiently brought to *their* doors to *make* them feel the precariousness with which all American property is possessed. But let our

imaginations transport us for a few moments to Boston: that seat of wretchedness will teach us wisdom, and instruct us forever to renounce a power in whom we can have no trust. The inhabitants of that unfortunate city, who but a few months ago were in ease and affluence, have now no other alternative than to stay and starve, or turn out to beg. Endangered by the fire of their friends if they continue within the city, and plundered by the soldiery if they leave it. In their present situation they are prisoners without the hope of redemption, and in a general attack for their relief, they would be exposed to the fury of both armies.

Men of passive tempers look somewhat lightly over the offences of Britain, and still hoping for the best, are apt to call out, *Come, come, we shall be friends again for all this.* But examine the passions and feelings of mankind, bring the doctrine of reconciliation to the touchstone of nature, and then tell me whether you can hereafter love, honor, and faithfully serve the power that hath carried fire and sword into your land? If you cannot do all these, then you are only deceiving yourselves, and by your delay bringing ruin upon your posterity. Your future connection with Britain, whom you can neither love nor honor, will be forced and unnatural, and being formed only on the plan of present convenience, will in a little time fall into a relapse more wretched than the first. But if you say, you can still pass the violations over, then I ask, Hath your house been burnt? Hath your property been destroyed before your face? Are your wife and children destitute of a bed to lie on, or bread to live on? Have you lost a parent or a child by their hands, and yourself the ruined and wretched survivor? If you have not, then you are not a judge of those who have. But if you have, and can still shake hands with the murderers, then you are unworthy the name of husband, father, friend, or lover, and whatever

may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward, and the spirit of a sycophant.

This is not inflaming or exaggerating matters, but trying them by those feelings and affections which nature justifies, and without which, we should be incapable of discharging the social duties of life, or enjoying the felicities of it. I mean not to exhibit horror for the purpose of provoking revenge, but to awaken us from fatal and unmanly slumbers, that we may pursue determinately some fixed object. It is not in the power of Britain or of Europe to conquer America, if she does not conquer herself by *delay* and *timidity*. The present winter is worth an age if rightly employed, but if lost or neglected the whole continent will partake of the misfortune; and there is no punishment which that man will not deserve, be he who, or what, or where he will, that may be the means of sacrificing a season so precious and useful.

It is repugnant to reason, to the universal order of things, to all examples from former ages, to suppose that this continent can longer remain subject to any external power. The most sanguine in Britain does not think so. The utmost stretch of human wisdom cannot, at this time, compass a plan short of separation, which can promise the continent even a year's security. Reconciliation is *now* a fallacious dream. Nature hath deserted the connection, and art cannot supply her place. For, as Milton wisely expresses, "never can true reconcilement grow, where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep."

Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual. Our prayers have been rejected with disdain; and only tended to convince us that nothing flatters vanity, or confirms obstinacy in kings more than repeated petitioning — and nothing hath contributed more that this very measure to make the kings of Europe absolute: witness Denmark and Sweden. Wherefore, since nothing but

blows will do, for God's sake, let us come to a final separation, and not leave the next generation to be cutting throats, under the violated unmeaning names of parent and child.

To say they will never attempt it again, is idle and visionary; we thought so at the repeal of the stamp act, yet a year or two undeceived us: as well may we suppose that nations, which have been once defeated, will never renew the quarrel.

As to government matters, it is not in the power of Britain to do this continent justice: the business of it will soon be too weighty and intricate to be managed with any tolerable degree of convenience by a power so distant from us, and so very ignorant of us; for if they cannot conquer us, they cannot govern us. To be always running three or four thousand miles with a tale or a petition, waiting four or five months for an answer, which, when obtained, requires five or six more to explain it in, will in a few years be looked upon as folly and childishness — there was a time when it was proper, and there is a proper time for it to cease.

Small islands, not capable of protecting themselves, are the proper objects for kingdoms to take under their care; but there is something very absurd in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island. In no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet; and as England and America, with respect to each other, reverses the common order of nature, it is evident that they belong to different systems: England to Europe — America to itself.

I am not induced by motives of pride, party, or resentment to espouse the doctrine of separation and independence; I am clearly, positively, and conscientiously persuaded that it is the true interest of this continent to be so; that everything short of *that* is mere patchwork; that it can afford no lasting felicity,— that

it is leaving the sword to our children, and shrinking back at a time, when a little more, a little further, would have rendered this continent the glory of the earth.

As Britain hath not manifested the least inclination towards a compromise, we may be assured that no terms can be obtained worthy the acceptance of the continent, or any ways equal to the expense of blood and treasure we have been already put to.

The object contended for, ought always to bear some just proportion to the expense. The removal of North, or the whole detestable junto, is a matter unworthy the millions we have expended. A temporary stoppage of trade was an inconvenience which would have sufficiently balanced the repeal of all the acts complained of, had such repeals been obtained ; but if the whole continent must take up arms, if every man must be a soldier, it is scarcely worth our while to fight against a contemptible ministry only. Dearly, dearly do we pay for the repeal of the acts, if that is all we fight for ; for, in a just estimation, it is as great a folly to pay a Bunker-hill price for law as for land. As I have always considered the independency of this continent, as an event which sooner or later must arrive, so from the late rapid progress of the continent to maturity, the event could not be far off. Wherefore, on the breaking out of hostilities, it was not worth the while to have disputed a matter which time would have fairly redressed, unless we meant to be in earnest ; otherwise, it is like wasting an estate on a suit at law, to regulate the trespasses of a tenant whose lease is just expiring. No man was a warmer wisher for reconciliation than myself before the fatal nineteenth of April, 1775,* but the moment the event of that day was made known, I rejected the hardened, sullen-tempered Pharoah of England forever; and disdain the wretch, that with the

* Massacre at Lexington.

pretended title of *Father of his people*, can unfeelingly hear of their slaughter, and composedly sleep with their blood upon his soul.

But admitting that matters were now made up, what would be the event? I answer, the ruin of the continent. And that for several reasons:

First, The powers of governing still remaining in the hands of the king, he will have a negative over the whole legislation of the continent. And as he hath shown himself such an inveterate enemy to liberty, and discovered such a thirst for arbitrary power, is he, or is he not, a proper person to say to these colonies, "*You shall make no laws but what I please?*" And is there any inhabitant in America so ignorant as not to know, that according to what is called the *present constitution*, this continent can make no laws but what the king gives leave to? and is there any man so unwise as not to see, that (considering what has happened) he will suffer no law to be made here, but such as suits *his* purpose? We may be as effectually enslaved by the want of laws in America, as by submitting to laws made for us in England. After matters are made up (as it is called) can there be any doubt, but the whole power of the crown will be exerted, to keep this continent as low and humble as possible? Instead of going forward we shall go backward, or be perpetually quarreling, or ridiculously petitioning. We are already greater than the king wishes us to be, and will he not hereafter endeavor to make us less? To bring the matter to one point, Is the power who is jealous of our prosperity a proper power to govern us? Whoever says *No*, to this question, is an *independent*, for independency means no more than this, whether we shall make our own laws, or whether the king, the greatest enemy which this continent hath or can have, shall tell us, "*there shall be no laws but such as I like.*"

But the king, you will say, has a negative in England; the people there can make no laws without his consent. In point of right and good order, there is something very ridiculous, that a youth of twenty-one (which hath often happened) shall say to several millions of people, older and wiser than himself, I forbid this or that act of yours to be law. But in this place I decline this sort of reply, though I will never cease to expose the absurdity of it; and only answer, that England being the king's residence and America not, makes quite another case. The king's negative *here* is ten times more dangerous and fatal than it can be in England; for *there* he will scarcely refuse his consent to a bill for putting England into as strong a state of defence as possible, and in America he would never suffer such a bill to be passed.

America is only a secondary object in the system of British politics — England consults the good of *this* country no further than it answers her *own* purpose. Wherefore, her own interest leads her to suppress the growth of *ours* in every case which doth not promote her advantage, or in the least interferes with it. A pretty state we should soon be in under such a second-hand government, considering what has happened! Men do not change from enemies to friends by the alteration of a name; and in order to show that reconciliation *now* is a dangerous doctrine, I affirm, *that it would be policy in the king at this time, to repeal the acts, for the sake of reinstating himself in the government of the provinces;* in order that *he may accomplish by craft and subtlety, in the long run, what he cannot do by force and violence in the short one.* Reconciliation and ruin are nearly related.

Secondly, That as even the best terms, which we can expect to obtain, can amount to no more than a temporary expedient, or a kind of government by guardianship, which can last no longer than till the colonies come of age, so the general face and state of things, in the interim,

will be unsettled and unpromising. Emigrants of property will not choose to come to a country whose form of government hangs but by a thread, and which is every day tottering on the brink of commotion and disturbance; and numbers of the present inhabitants would lay hold of the interval to dispose of their effects, and quit the continent.

But the most powerful of all arguments is, that nothing but independence, *i. e.*, a continental form of government, can keep the peace of the continent and preserve it inviolate from civil wars. I dread the event of a reconciliation with Britain now, as it is more than probable that it will be followed by a revolt somewhere or other, the consequences of which may be far more fatal than all the malice of Britain.

Thousands are already ruined by British barbarity. Thousands more will probably suffer the same fate. Those men have other feelings than us who have nothing suffered. All they *now* possess is liberty; what they before enjoyed is sacrificed to its service, and having nothing more to lose, they disdain submission. Besides, the general temper of the colonies towards a British government, will be like that of a youth who is nearly out of his time; they will care very little about her. And a government which cannot preserve the peace, is no government at all, and in that case we pay our money for nothing; and pray what is it that Britain can do, whose power will be wholly on paper, should a civil tumult break out the very day after reconciliation? I have heard some men say, many of whom I believe spoke without thinking, that they dreaded an independence, fearing that it would produce civil wars. It is but seldom that our first thoughts are truly correct, and that is the case here; for there is ten times more to dread from a patched up connection than from independence. I make the sufferer's case my own, and I protest, that were I

driven from house and home, my property destroyed, and my circumstances ruined, that as a man, sensible of injuries, I could never relish the doctrine of reconciliation, or consider myself bound thereby.

The colonies have manifested such a spirit of good order and obedience to continental government, as is sufficient to make every reasonable person easy and happy on that head. No man can assign the least pretence for his fears, on any other grounds, than such as are truly childish and ridiculous, viz., that one colony will be striving for superiority over another.

Where there are no distinctions there can be no superiority; perfect equality affords no temptation. The republics of Europe are all (and we may say always) in peace. Holland and Switzerland are without wars, foreign or domestic; monarchical governments, it is true, are never long at rest: the crown itself is a temptation to enterprising ruffians at home; and that degree of pride and insolence ever attendant on legal authority, swells into a rupture with foreign powers, in instances where a republican government, by being formed on more natural principles, would negotiate the mistake.

If there is any true cause of fear respecting independence, it is because no plan is yet laid down. Men do not see their way out; wherefore, as an opening into that business, I offer the following hints; at the same time modestly affiming, that I have no other opinion of them myself, than that they may be the means of giving rise to something better. Could the straggling thoughts of individuals be collected, they would frequently form materials for wise and able men to improve into useful matter.

Let the assemblies be annual, with a president only. The representation more equal. Their business wholly domestic, and subject to the authority of a continental congress.

Let each colony be divided into six, eight, or ten, convenient districts, each district to send a proper number of delegates to congress, so that each colony sends at least thirty. The whole number in congress will be at least three hundred and ninety. Each congress to sit . . . . . and to choose a president by the following method: When the delegates are met, let a colony be taken from the whole thirteen colonies by lot, after which, let the whole congress choose (by ballot) a president from out of the delegates of that province. In the next congress, let a colony be taken by lot from twelve only, omitting that colony from which the president was taken in the former congress, and so proceeding on till the whole thirteen shall have had their proper rotation. And in order that nothing may pass into a law but what is satisfactorily just, not less than three-fifths of the congress to be called a majority. He that will promote discord, under a government so equally formed as this, would have joined Lucifer in his revolt.

But as there is a peculiar delicacy, from whom or in what manner this business must first arise, and as it seems most agreeable and consistent that it should come from some intermediate body between the governed and the governors, that is, between the congress and the people, let a *Continental Conference* be held, in the following manner, and for the following purpose:

A committee of twenty-six members of congress, viz., two for each colony. Two members from each house of assembly, or provincial convention; and five representatives of the people at large, to be chosen in the capital city or town of each province, for and in behalf of the whole province, by as many qualified voters as shall think proper to attend from all parts of the province for that purpose; or, if more convenient, the representatives may be chosen in two or three of the most populous parts thereof. In this conference, thus assembled, will be

united, the two grand principles of business, *knowledge* and *power*. The members of congress, assemblies, or conventions, by having had experience in national concerns, will be able and useful counsellors, and the whole, being empowered by the people, will have a truly legal authority.

The conferring members being met, let their business be to frame a *Continental Charter*, or Charter of the United Colonies ; (answering to what is called the Magna Charta of England) fixing the number and manner of choosing members of congress, and members of assembly, with their date of sitting, and drawing the line of business and jurisdiction between them : always remembering, that our strength is continental, not provincial : securing freedom and property to all men, and above all things, the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience ; with such other matter as is necessary for a charter to contain. Immediately after which, the said conference to disolve, and the bodies which shall be chosen conformable to the said charter, to be the legislators and governors of this continent for the time being ; whose peace and happiness, may God preserve, Amen.

Should any body of men be hereafter delegated for this or some similar purpose, I offer them the following extracts from that wise observer on governments, Dragonetti. "The science," says he, "of the politician consists in fixing the true point of happiness and freedom. Those men would deserve the gratitude of ages, who should discover a mode of government that contained the greatest sum of individual happiness, with the least national expense."—*Dragonetti on Virtueand Rewards.*

But where, say some, is the king of America? I'll tell you, friend, he reigns above, and doth not make havoc of mankind like the royal brute of Britain. Yet that we may not appear to be defective even in earthly honors, let a day be solemnly set apart for proclaiming the charter ; let it be brought forth, placed on the divine

law, the word of God ; let a crown be placed thereon, by which the world may know, that so far as we approve of monarchy, that in America *the law is king*. For as in absolute governments the king is law, so in free countries the law ought to be king ; and there ought to be no other. But lest any ill use should afterwards arise, let the crown at the conclusion of the ceremony be demolished and scattered among the people whose right it is.

A government of our own is our natural right : and when a man seriously reflects on the precariousness of human affairs, he will become convinced that it is infinitely wiser and safer to form a constitution of our own, in a cool deliberate manner, while we have it in our power, than to trust such an interesting event to time and chance. If we omit it now, some Massaniello* may hereafter arise, who, laying hold of popular disquietudes, may collect together the desperate and the discontented, and by assuming to themselves the powers of government, may sweep away the liberties of the continent like a deluge. Should the government of America return again into the hands of Britain, the tottering situation of things will be a temptation for some desperate adventurer to try his fortune ; and in such a case, what relief can Britain give? Ere she could hear the news, the fatal business might be done ; and ourselves suffering like the wretched Britains under the oppression of the conqueror. Ye that oppose independence now, ye know not what ye do ; ye are opening a door to eternal tyranny, by keeping vacant the seat of government.

There are thousands and tens of thousands who would think it glorious to expel from the continent that barbarous and hellish power which hath stirred up the Indians and negroes to destroy us ; the cruelty hath a

* Thomas Aniello, otherwise Massaniello, a fisherman of Napels, who, after spiriting up his countrymen in the public market-place, against the oppression of the Spaniards, to whom the place was then subject, prompted them to revolt, and in the space of a day became king.

double guilt ; it is dealing brutally by us and treacherously by them. To talk of friendship with those in whom our reason forbids us to have faith, and our affections, (wounded through a thousand pores,) instruct us to detest, is madness and folly. Every day wears out the little remains of kindred between us and them ; and can there be any reason to hope that as the relationship expires the affection will increase, or that we shall agree better when we have ten times more and greater concerns to quarrel over than ever ?

Ye that tell us of harmony and reconciliation, can ye restore to us the time that is passed ? Can ye give to prostitution its former innocence ? Neither can ye reconcile Britain and America. The last cord now is broken ; the people of England are presenting addresses against us. There are injuries which nature cannot forgive ; she would cease to be nature if she did. As well can the lover forgive the ravisher of his mistress, as the continent forgive the murders of Britain. The Almighty hath implanted in us these unextinguishable feelings for good and wise purposes. They are the guardians of his image in our hearts. They distinguish us from the herd of common animals. The social compact would dissolve and justice be extirpated from the earth, or have only a casual existence, were we callous to the touches of affection. The robber and the murderer would often escape unpunished, did not the injuries which our tempers sustain, provoke us into justice.

O ye that love mankind ! Ye that dare oppose, not only the tyranny, but the tyrant, stand forth ! Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia and Africa have long expelled her, Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O ! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.

Of the present Ability of America, with some miscellaneous reflections.

I HAVE never met with a man, either in England or America, who hath not confessed his opinion that a separation between the countries would take place one time or other: and there is no instance, in which we have shown less judgment, than in endeavoring to describe what we call the ripeness or fitness of the continent for independence.

As all men allow the measure, and vary only in their opinion of the time, let us, in order to remove mistakes, take a general survey of things, and endeavor, if possible, to find out the *very* time. But we need not go far, the inquiry ceases at once, for the *time hath found us.* The general concurrence, the glorious union of all things proves the fact.

It is not in numbers, but in unity, that our great strength lies; yet our present numbers are sufficient to repel the force of all the world. The continent hath, at this time, the largest body of armed and disciplined men of any power under heaven; and is just arrived at that pitch of strength, in which no single colony is able to support itself, and the whole when united can accomplish the matter, and either more or less than this might be fatal in its effects. Our land force is already sufficient, and as to naval affairs, we cannot be insensible that Britain would never suffer an American man of war to be built while the continent remained in her hands. Wherefore, we should be no forwarder an hundred years

hence in that branch than we are now; but the truth is, we should be less so, because the timber of the country is every day diminishing, and that which will remain at last will be far off or difficult to procure.

Were the continent crowded with inhabitants, her sufferings under the present circumstances would be intolerable. The more seaport towns we had, the more should we have both to defend and to lose. Our present numbers are so happily proportioned to our wants, that no man need be idle. The diminution of trade affords an army, and the necessities of an army create a new trade. Debts we have none: and whatever we may contract on this account will serve as a glorious memento of our virtue. Can we but leave posterity with a settled form of government, an independent constitution of its own, the purchase at any price will be cheap. But to expend millions for the sake of getting a few vile acts repealed, and routing the present ministry only, is unworthy the charge, and is using posterity with the utmost cruelty; because it is leaving them the great work to do, and a debt upon their backs from which they derive no advantage. Such a thought is unworthy a man of honor, and is the true characteristic of a narrow heart and a peddling politician.

The debt we may contract doth not deserve our regard, if the work be but accomplished. No nation ought to be without a debt. A national debt is a national bond; and when it bears no interest, is in no case a grievance. Britain is oppressed with a debt of upwards of one hundred and forty millions sterling, for which she pays upwards of four millions interest. And as a compensation for her debt, she has a large navy; America is without a debt, and without a navy; yet for the twentieth part of the English national debt, could have a navy as large again. The navy of England is not worth, at this time, more than three millions and a half sterling.

The following calculations are given as a proof that the above estimation of the navy is a just one. (*See Entick's Naval History, Intro.* page 56.)

The charge of building a ship of each rate, and furnishing her with masts, yards, sails, and rigging, together with a proportion of eight months boatswain's and carpenter's sea-stores, as calculated by Mr. Burchett, Secretary to the navy, is as follows:

For a ship of 100 guns	£35,553
90	29,886
80	23,638
70	17,785
60	14,197
50	10,606
40	7,758
30	5,846
20	3,710

And from hence it is easy to sum up the value, or cost rather, of the whole British navy, which in the year 1757 when it was at its greatest glory, consisted of the following ships and guns:

Ships.	Guns.	Cost of one.	Cost of all.
6	100	£35,553	£213,318
12	90	29,886	358,632
12	80	23,638	283,656
43	70	17,785	764,755
35	60	14,197	496,895
40	50	10,606	424,240
45	40	7,758	344,110
58	20	3,710	215,180
85	Sloops, bombs, and fire-ships, one with another	2,000	170,000
		Cost	3,270,786
		Remains for guns	229,214
			£3,500,000

No country on the globe is so happily situated, or so internally capable of raising a fleet as America. Tar, timber, iron, and cordage are her natural produce. We need go abroad for nothing. Whereas the Dutch, who

make large profits by hiring out their ships of war to the Spaniards and Portuguese, are obliged to import most of the materials they use. We ought to view the building a fleet as an article of commerce, it being the natural manufacture of this country. It is the best money we can lay out. A navy when finished is worth more than it cost: and is that nice point in national policy, in which commerce and protection are united. Let us build; if we want them not, we can sell; and by that means replace our paper currency with ready gold and silver.

In point of manning a fleet, people in general run into great errors; it is not necessary that one-fourth part should be sailors. The privateer *Terrible*, captain Death, stood the hottest engagement of any ship last war, yet had not twenty sailors on board, though her complement of men was upwards of two hundred. A few able and social sailors will soon instruct a sufficient number of active landsmen in the common work of a ship. Wherefore, we never can be more capable to begin on maritime matters than now, while our timber is standing, our fisheries blocked up, and our sailors and shipwrights out of employ. Men of war, of seventy and eighty guns, were built forty years ago in New England, and why not the same now? Ship building is America's greatest pride, and in which she will, in time, excel the whole world. The great empires of the east are mostly inland, and consequently excluded from the possibility of rivaling her. Africa is in a state of barbarism; and no power in Europe hath either such an extent of coast, or such an internal supply of materials. Where nature hath given the one, she hath withheld the other; to America only hath she been liberal of both. The vast empire of Russia is almost shut out from the sea; wherefore, her boundless forests, her tar, iron, and cordage are only articles of commerce.

In point of safety, ought we to be without a fleet? We are not the little people now which we were sixty years ago; at that time we might have trusted our property in the streets, or fields rather; and slept securely without locks or bolts to our doors or windows. The case is now altered, and our methods of defence ought to improve with our increase of property. A common pirate, twelve months ago, might have come up the Delaware, and laid the city of Philadelphia under instant contribution for what sum he pleased; and the same might have happened to other places. Nay, any daring fellow, in a brig of fourteen or sixteen guns, might have robbed the whole continent, and carried off half a million of money. These are circumstances which demand our attention, and point out the necessity of naval protection.

Some, perhaps, will say, that after we have made it up with Britain, she will protect us. Can they be so unwise as to mean, that she will keep a navy in our harbors for that purpose? Common sense will tell us that the power which hath endeavored to subdue us, is of all others the most improper to defend us. Conquest may be effected under the pretence of friendship; and ourselves, after a long and brave resistance, be at last cheated into slavery. And if her ships are not to be admitted into our harbors, I would ask, how is she to protect us? A navy three or four thousand miles off can be of little use, and on sudden emergencies, none at all. Wherefore, if we must hereafter protect ourselves, why not do it for ourselves? Why do it for another?

The English list of ships of war is long and formidable, but not a tenth part of them are at any one time fit for service, numbers of them are not in being; yet their names are pompously continued in the list if only a plank be left of the ship; and not a fifth part of such as are fit for service can be spared on any one station at one time.

The East and West Indies, Mediterranean, Africa, and other parts of the world, over which Britain extends her claim, make large demands upon her navy. From a mixture of prejudice and inattention, we have contracted a false notion respecting the navy of England, and have talked as if we should have the whole of it to encounter at once, and, for that reason, supposed that we must have one as large; which not being instantly practicable, has been made use of by a set of disguised tories to discourage our beginning thereon. Nothing can be further from truth than this; for if America had only a twentieth part of the naval force of Britain, she would be by far an over match for her; because, as we neither have nor claim any foreign dominion, our whole force would be employed on our own coast, where we should, in the long run, have two to one the advantage of those who had three or four thousand miles to sail over before they could attack us, and the same distance to return in order to refit and recruit. And although Britain, by her fleet, hath a check over our trade to Europe, we have as large a one over her trade to the West Indies, which by laying in the neighborhood of the continent is entirely at its mercy.

Some method might be fallen on to keep up a naval force in time of peace, if we should not judge it necessary to support a constant navy. If premiums were to be given to merchants to build and employ in their service, ships mounted with twenty, thirty, forty or fifty guns (the premiums to be in proportion to the loss of bulk to the merchants) fifty or sixty of those ships with a few guard-ships on constant duty, would keep up a sufficient navy, and that without burdening ourselves with the evil so loudly complained of in England, of suffering their fleet in time of peace to lie rotting in the docks. To unite the sinews of commerce and defence is sound policy; for when our strength and our riches play into each other's hand, we need fear no external enemy.

In almost every article of defence we abound. Hemp flourishes even to rankness, so that we need not want cordage. Our iron is superior to that of other countries. Our small arms equal to any in the world. Cannon we can cast at pleasure. Saltpetre and gunpowder we are every day producing. Our knowledge is hourly improving. Resolution is our inherent character, and courage hath not yet forsaken us. Wherefore, what is it that we want? Why is it that we hesitate? From Britain we can expect nothing but ruin. If she is once admitted to the government of America again, this continent will not be worth living in. Jealousies will be always arising, insurrections will be constantly happening; and who will go forth to quell them? Who will venture his life to reduce his own countrymen to a foreign obedience? The difference between Pennsylvania and Connecticut, respecting some unlocated lands, shows the insignificance of a British government, and fully proves that nothing but continental authority can regulate continental matters.

Another reason why the present time is preferable to all others, is that the fewer our numbers are, the more land there is yet unoccupied, which, instead of being lavished by the king on his worthless dependants, may be hereafter applied, not only to the discharge of the present debt, but to the constant support of government. No nation under heaven hath such an advantage as this.

The infant state of the colonies, as it is called, so far from being against, is an argument in favor of independence. We are sufficiently numerous, and were we more so we might be less united. It is a matter worthy of observation, that the more a country is peopled, the the smaller their armies are. In military numbers, the ancients far exceeded the moderns: and the reason is evident, for trade being the consequence of population, men became too much absorbed thereby to attend to any-

thing else. Commerce diminishes the spirit both of patriotism and military defence. And history sufficiently informs us, that the bravest achievements were always accomplished in the non-age of a nation. With the increase of commerce England hath lost its spirit. The city of London, notwithstanding its numbers, submits to continued insults with the patience of a coward. The more men have to lose, the less willing they are to venture. The rich are in general slaves to fear, and submit to courtly power with the trembling duplicity of a spaniel.

Youth is the seed-time of good habits, as well in nations as in individuals. It might be difficult, if not impossible, to form the continent into one government half a century hence. The vast variety of interests, occasioned by an increase of trade and population, would create confusion. Colony would be against colony. Each being able, might scorn each other's assistance; and while the proud and foolish gloried in their little distinctions, the wise would lament that the union had not been formed before. Wherefore, the *present time* is the *true time* for establishing it. The intimacy which is contracted in infancy, and the friendship which is formed in misfortune, are of all others, the most lasting and unalterable. Our present union is marked with both these characters; we are young, and we have been distressed; but our concord hath withstood our troubles, and fixes a memorable era for posterity to glory in.

The present time, likewise, is that peculiar time which never happens to a nation but once, viz., the time of forming itself into a government. Most nations have let slip the opportunity, and by that means have been compelled to receive laws from their conquerors, instead of making laws for themselves. First, they had a king, and then a form of government; whereas the articles or charter of government, should be formed first, and men delegated to execute them afterwards: but from the

errors of other nations, let us learn wisdom, and lay hold of the present opportunity — *to begin government at the right end.*

When William the Conqueror subdued England, he gave them law at the point of the sword; and until we consent that the seat of government in America be legally and authoritatively occupied, we shall be in danger of having it filled by some fortunate ruffian, who may treat us in the same manner, and then, where will be our freedom? where our property?

As to religion, I hold it to be the indispensible duty of all governments to protect all conscientious professors thereof, and I know of no other business which government hath to do therewith. Let a man throw aside that narrowness of soul, that selfishness of principle, which the niggards of all professions are so unwilling to part with, and he will be at once delivered of his fears on that head. Suspicion is the companion of mean souls, and the bane of all good society. For myself, I fully and conscientiously believe, that it is the will of the Almighty, that there should be a diversity of religious opinions among us: it affords a larger field for our Christian kindness. Were we all of one way of thinking, our religious dispositions would want matter for probation, and on this liberal principle, I look on the various denominations among us, to be like children of the same family, differing only in what is called their Christian names.

In page thirty-five, I threw out a few thoughts on the propriety of a Continental Charter (for I only presume to offer hints, not plans) and in this place I take the liberty of rementioning the subject, by observing, that a charter is to be understood as a bond of solemn obligation, which the whole enters into, to support the right of every separate part, whether of religion, personal freedom, or property. A firm bargain and a right reckoning make long friends.

In a former page I likewise mentioned the necessity of a large and equal representation; and there is no political matter which more deserves our attention. A small number or electors, or a small number of representatives, are equally dangerous. But if the number of the representatives be not only small, but unequal, the danger is increased. As an instance of this, I mention the following: when the Associators petition was before the House of Assembly of Pennsylvania, twenty-eight members only were present; all the Bucks County members, being eight, voted against it, and had seven of the Chester members done the same, this whole province had then been governed by two counties only; and this danger it is always exposed to. The unwarrantable stretch, likewise, which that house made in their last sitting, to gain an undue authority over the delegates of that province, ought to warn the people at large how they trust power out of their own hands. A set of instructions for their delegates were put together, which in point of sense and business would have dishonored a school-boy, and after being approved of by a *few*, a *very few*, without doors, were carried into the house, and there passed *in behalf of the whole colony;* whereas, did the whole colony know with what ill will that house had entered on some necessary public measures, they would not hesitate a moment to think them unworthy of such a trust.

Immediate necessity makes many things convenient, which if continued would grow into oppressions. Expedience and right are different things. When the calamities of America required a consultation, there was no method so ready, or at that time so proper, as to appoint persons from the several Houses of Assembly for that purpose; and the wisdom with which they have proceeded hath preserved this continent from ruin. But as it is more than probable that we shall never be without a *Congress*, every well-wisher to good order must

own, that the mode for choosing members of that body, deserves consideration. And I put it as a question to those who make a study of mankind, whether *representation and election* is not too great a power for one and the same body of men to possess? Whenever we are planning for posterity we ought to remember that virtue is not hereditary.

It is from our enemies that we often gain excellent maxims, and are frequently surprised into reason by their mistakes. Mr. Cornwall (one of the lords of the treasury) treated the petition of the New York Assembly with contempt, because *that* house, he said, consisted but of twenty-six members, which trifling number, he argued, could not with decency be put for the whole. We thank him for his involuntary honesty.*

To conclude: However strange it may appear to some, or however unwilling they may be to think so, matters not, but many strong and striking reasons may be given, to show that nothing can settle our affairs so expeditiously as an open and determined declaration for independence. Some of which are:

First. It is the custom of nations, when any two are at war, for some other powers, not engaged in the quarrel, to step in as mediators, and bring about the preliminaries of a peace: but while America calls herself the subject of Britain, no power, however well disposed she may be, can offer her mediation. Wherefore, in our present state, we may quarrel on forever.

Secondly. It is unreasonable to suppose that France or Spain will give us any kind of assistance, if we mean only to make use of that assistance for the purpose of repairing the breach, and strengthening the connection between Britain and America; because, those powers would be sufferers by the consequences.

* Those who would fully understand of what great consequence a large and equal representation is to a State, should read Burgh's *Political Disquisitions*.

Thirdly. While we profess ourselves the subjects of Britain, we must, in the eyes of foreign nations, be considered as rebels. The precedent is somewhat dangerous to *their peace*, for men to be in arms under the name of subjects; we, on the spot, can solve the paradox: but to unite resistance and subjection, requires an idea much too refined for common understanding.

Fourthly. Were a manifesto to be published and dispatched to foreign courts, setting forth the miseries we have endured, and the peaceful methods which we have ineffectually used for redress; declaring at the same time, that not being able, any longer, to live happily or safely under the cruel disposition of the British court, we had been driven to the necessity of breaking off all connection with her; at the same time, assuring all such courts of our peaceable disposition towards them, and of our desire of entering into trade with them. Such a memorial would produce more good effects to this continent than if a ship were freighted with petitions to Britain.

Under our present denomination of British subjects, we can neither be received nor heard abroad: the custom of all courts is against us, and will be so, until, by an independence, we take rank with other nations.

These proceedings may at first appear strange and difficult; but like all other steps which we have already passed over, will in a little time become familiar and agreeable; and, until an independence is declared, the continent will feel itself like a man who continues putting off some unpleasant business from day to day, yet knows it must be done, hates to set about it, wishes it over, and is continually haunted with the thoughts of its necessity.

APPENDIX.

SINCE the publication of the first edition of this pamphlet, or rather, on the same day on which it came out, the king's speech made its appearance in this city. Had the spirit of prophecy directed the birth of this production, it could not have brought it forth at a more seasonable juncture, or at a more necessary time. The bloody-mindedness of the one, shows the necessity of pursuing the doctrine of the other. Men read by way of revenge: and the speech, instead of terrifying, prepared a way for the manly principles of independence.

Ceremony, and even silence, from whatever motives they may arise, have a hurtful tendency when they give the least degree of countenance to base and wicked performances; wherefore, if this maxim be admitted, it naturally follows, that the king's speech, as being a piece of finished villainy, deserved and still deserves a general execration, both by the congress and the people. Yet, as the domestic tranquility of a nation depends greatly on the *chastity* of what may properly be called *national manners*, it is often better to pass some things over in silent disdain, than to make use of such new methods of dislike, as might introduce the least innovation on that guardian of our peace and safety. And, perhaps, it is chiefly owing to this prudent delicacy, that the king's speech hath not before now suffered a public execution. The speech, if it may be called one, is nothing better than a willful, audacious libel against the truth, the

common good, and the existence of mankind; and is a formal and pompous method of offering up human sacrifices to the pride of tyrants. But this general massacre of mankind is one of the privileges and the certain consequences of kings; for as nature knows them *not*, they know *not her*, and although they are beings of our *own* creating, they know not *us*, and are become the gods of their creators. The speech hath one good quality, which is, that it is not calculated to deceive, neither can we, if we would, be deceived by it. Brutality and tyranny appear on the face of it. It leaves us at no loss; and every line convinces, even in the moment of reading, that he who hunts the woods for prey, the naked and untutored Indian, is less savage than the king of Britain.

Sir John Dalrymple, the putative father of a whining jesuitical piece, fallaciously called, *The address of the people of* ENGLAND *to the inhabitants of* AMERICA, hath perhaps, from a vain supposition that the people *here* were to be frightened at the pomp and description of a king, given (though very unwisely on his part) the real character of the present one: "But," says this writer, "if you are inclined to pay compliments to an administration, which we do not complain of" (meaning the Marquis of Rockingham's at the repeal of the Stamp Act) "it is very unfair in you to withhold them from that prince, *by whose* NOD ALONE *they were permitted to do anything*." This is toryism with a witness! Here is idolatry even without a mask; and he who can calmly hear and digest such doctrine, hath forfeited his claim to rationality; is an apostate from the order of manhood, and ought to be considered — as one, who hath not only given up the proper dignity of man, but sunk himself beneath the rank of animals, and contemptibly crawls through the world like a worm.

However, it matters very little now, what the king of England either says or does; he hath wickedly broken

through every moral and human obligation, trampled nature and conscience beneath his feet; and by a steady and constitutional spirit of insolence and cruelty, procured for himself an universal hatred. It is *now* the interest of America to provide for herself. She hath already a large and young family, whom it is more her duty to take care of, than to be granting away her property to support a power which is become a reproach to the names of men and Christians. *Ye*, whose office it is to watch over the morals of a nation, of whatsoever sect or denomination ye are of, as well as ye who are more immediately the guardians of the public liberty, if ye wish to preserve your native country uncontaminated by European corruption, ye must in secret wish a separation. But leaving the moral part to private reflection, I shall chiefly confine my further remarks to the following heads:

First, That it is in the interest of America to be separated from Britain.

Secondly, Which is the easiest and most practicable plan, *reconciliation* or *independence?* with some occasional remarks.

In support of the first, I could, if I judged it proper, produce the opinion of some of the ablest and most experienced men on this continent: and whose sentiments on that head are not yet publicly known. It is in reality a self-evident position: for no nation in a state of foreign dependence, limited in its commerce, and cramped and fettered in its legislative powers, can ever arrive at any material eminence. America doth not yet know what opulence is; and although the progress she hath made stands unparalleled in the history of other nations, it is but childhood compared with what she would be capable of arriving at, had she, as she ought to have, the legislative powers in her own hands. England is at this time proudly coveting what would do her no good were she

to accomplish it; and the continent hesitating on a matter which will be her final ruin if neglected. It is the commerce and not the conquest of America by which England is to be benefitted, and that would in a great measure continue, were the countries as independent of each other as France and Spain; because in many articles neither can go to a better market. But it is the independence of this country of Britain, or any other, which is now the main and only object worthy of contention, and which, like all other truths discovered by necessity, will appear clearer and stronger every day.

First, Because it will come to that one time or other.

Secondly, Because the longer it is delayed, the harder it will be to accomplish.

I have frequently amused myself both in public and private companies, with silently remarking the spacious errors of those who speak without reflecting. And among the many which I have heard, the following seems the most general, viz., that if this rupture should happen forty or fifty years hence, instead of *now*, the continent would be more able to shake off the dependence. To which I reply, that our military ability, *at this time*, arises from the experience gained in the last war, and which in forty or fifty years time would be totally extinct. The continent would not, by that time, have a general, or even a military officer left; and we, or those who may succeed us, would be as ignorant of martial matters as the ancient Indians: and this single position, closely attended to, will unanswerably prove that the present time is preferable to all others. The argument turns thus — at the conclusion of the last war, we had experience, but wanted numbers; and forty or fifty years hence, we shall have numbers, without experience; wherefore, the proper point of time, must be some particular point between the two extremes, in which a sufficiency of the former remains, and a proper increase

of the latter is obtained : and that point of time is the present time.

The reader will pardon this digression, as it does not properly come under the head I first set out with, and to which I again return by the following position, viz. :

Should affairs be patched up with Britain, and she remain the governing and sovereign power of America, (which, as matters are now circumstanced, is giving up the point entirely) we shall deprive ourselves of the very means of sinking the debt we have, or may contract. The value of the back lands, which some of the provinces are clandestinely deprived of by the unjust extension of the limits of Canada, valued only at five pounds sterling per hundred acres, amount to upwards of twenty-five millions Pennsylvania currency ; and the quit-rents at one penny sterling per acre, to two millions yearly.

It is by the sale of those lands that the debt may be sunk without burden to any, and the quit-rent reserved thereon, will always lessen, and in time will wholly support the yearly expense of government. It matters not how long the debt is in paying, so that the lands when sold be applied to the discharge of it, and for the execution of which the congress, for the time being, will be the continental trustees.

I proceed now to the second head, viz. : Which is the easiest and most practicable plan, *reconciliation* or *independence?* with some occasional remarks.

He who takes nature for his guide, is not easily beaten out of his argument, and on that ground, I answer generally — *That* INDEPENDENCE *being a* SINGLE SIMPLE LINE, *contained within ourselves ; and reconciliation, a matter exceedingly perplexed and complicated, and in which a treacherous, capricious court is to interfere, gives the answer without a doubt.*

The present state of America is truly alarming to every man who is capable of reflection. Without law, without government, without any other mode of power than what is founded on, and granted by, courtesy. Held together by an unexampled concurrence of sentiment, which is nevertheless subject to change, and which every secret enemy is endeavoring to dissolve. Our present condition is legislation without law; wisdom without a plan; a constitution without a name; and, what is strangely astonishing, perfect independence contending for dependence. The instance is without a precedent; the case never existed before; and who can tell what may be the event? The property of no man is secure in the present unbraced system of things. The mind of the multitude is left at random, and seeing no fixed object before them, they pursue such as fancy or opinion presents. Nothing is criminal; there is no such thing as treason; wherefore, every one thinks himself at liberty to act as he pleases. The tories dared not have assembled offensively, had they known that their lives, by that act, were forfeited to the laws of the state. A line of distinction should be drawn between English soldiers taken in battle, and inhabitants of America taken in arms. The first are prisoners, but the latter traitors. The one forfeits his liberty, the other his head.

Notwithstanding our wisdom, there is a visible feebleness in some of our proceedings which gives encouragement to dissensions. The Continental Belt is too loosely buckled. And if something is not done in time, it will be too late to do anything, and we shall fall into a state in which neither *Reconciliation* nor *Independence* will be practicable. The king and his worthless adherents are got at their old game of dividing the continent, and there are not wanting among us printers who will be busy in spreading specious falsehoods. The artful and hypocritical letter which appeared a few months ago in two of

the New York papers, and likewise in others, is an evidence that there are men who want either judgment or honesty.

It is easy getting into holes and corners and talking of reconciliation: but do such men seriously consider how difficult the task is, and how dangerous it may prove, should the continent divide thereon? Do they take within their view all the various orders of men whose situation and circumstances, as well as their own, are to be considered therein. Do they put themselves in the place of the sufferer whose *all* is *already* gone, and of the soldier, who hath quitted *all* for the defence of his country? If their ill-judged moderation be suited to their own private situations *only*, regardless of others, the event will convince them that "they are reckoning without their host."

Put us, say some, on the footing we were in the year 1763: to which I answer, the request is not *now* in the power of Britain to comply with, neither will she propose it; but if it were, and even should it be granted, I ask, as a reasonable question, by what means is such a corrupt and faithless court to be kept to its engagements? Another parliament, nay, even the present, may hereafter repeal the obligation, on the pretence of its being violently obtained, or unwisely granted; and in that case, where is our redress? No going to law with nations; cannon are the barristers of crowns? and the sword, not of justice, but of war, decides the suit. To be on the footing of 1763, it is not sufficient that the laws only be put in the same state, but that our circumstances, likewise, be put in the same state; our burnt and destroyed towns repaired, or built up, our private losses made good, our public debts (contracted for defence) discharged; otherwise, we shall be millions worse than we were at that enviable period. Such a request, had it been complied with a year ago, would have won the heart and the

soul of the continent — but now it is too late, "the Rubicon is passed."

Besides, the taking up arms, merely to enforce the repeal of a pecuniary law, seems as unwarrantable by the divine law, and as repugnant to human feelings, as the taking up arms to enforce obedience thereto. The object, on either side, doth not justify the means; for the lives of men are too valuable to be cast away on such trifles. It is the violence which is done and threatened to our persons; the destruction of our property by an armed force; the invasion of our country by fire and sword, which conscientiously qualifies the use of arms: and the instant in which such a mode of defence became necessary, all subjection to Britain ought to have ceased; and the independence of America should have been considered as dating its era from, and published by, *the first musket that was fired against her.* This line is a line of consistency; neither drawn by caprice, nor extended by ambition; but produced by a chain of events of which the colonies were not the authors.

I shall conclude these remarks with the following timely and well-intended hints. We ought to reflect, that there are three different ways by which an independency may hereafter be effected; and that *one* of those *three* will, one day or other, be the fate of America, viz. By the legal voice of the people in congress; by a military power; or by a mob. It may not always happen that our soldiers are citizens, and the multitude a body of reasonable men; virtue, as I have already remarked, is not hereditary, neither is it perpetual. Should an independency be brought about by the first of those means, we have every opportunity and every encouragement before us, to form the noblest, purest constitution on the face of the earth. We have it in our power to begin the world over again. A situation, similar to the present, hath not happened since the days of Noah until now.

The birthday of a new world is at hand, and a race of men, perhaps as numerous as all Europe contains, are to receive their portion of freedom from the events of a few months. The reflection is awful—and in this point of view, how trifling, how ridiculous, do the little paltry cavilings of a few weak or interested men appear, when weighed against the business of a world.

Should we neglect the present favorable and inviting period, and independence be hereafter effected by any other means, we must charge the consequence to ourselves, or to those rather, whose narrow and prejudiced souls are habitually opposing the measure, without either inquiring or reflecting. There are reasons to be given in support of independence, which men should rather privately think of, than be publicly told of. We ought not to be debating whether we shall be independent or not, but anxious to accomplish it on a firm, secure and honorable basis, and uneasy rather, that it is not yet begun upon. Every day convinces us of its necessity. Even the tories (if such beings yet remain among us) should, of all men, be the most solicitous to promote it; for as the appointment of committees at first, protected them from popular rage, so a wise and well established form of government will be the only certain means of continuing it securely to them. Wherefore, if they have not virtue enough to be *Whigs*, they ought to have prudence enough to wish for independence.

In short, independence is the only *bond* that can tie and keep us together. We shall then see our object, and our ears shall be legally shut against the schemes of an intriguing, as well as a cruel enemy. We shall then, too, be on a proper footing to treat with Britain; for there is reason to conclude, that the pride of that court will be less hurt by treating with the American states for terms of peace, than with those whom she denominates "rebellious subjects," for terms of accommodation. It is our

delaying it that encourages her to hope for conquest, and our backwardness tends only to prolong the war. As we have, without any good effect therefrom, withheld our trade to obtain a redress of our grievances, let us *now* try the alternative, by independently redressing them ourselves, and then offering to open the trade. The mercantile and reasonable part of England will be still with us; because peace *with* trade, is preferable to war *without* it. And if this offer be not accepted, other courts may be applied to.

On these grounds I rest the matter. And as no offer hath yet been made to refute the doctrine contained in the former editions of this pamphlet, it is a negative proof that either the doctrine cannot be refuted, or that the party in favor of it are too numerous to be opposed. *Wherefore*, instead of gazing at each other, with suspicious or doubtful curiosity, let each of us hold out to his neighbor the hearty hand of friendship, and unite in drawing a line, which, like an act of oblivion, shall bury in forgetfulness every former dissension. Let the names of whig and tory be extinct; and let none other be heard among us, than those of a *good citizen*, *an open and resolute friend*, and *a virtuous supporter of the* RIGHTS *of* MANKIND, *and of the* FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES OF AMERICA.

EPISTLE TO QUAKERS.

To the Representatives of the Religious Society of the people called Quakers, or to so many of them as were concerned in publishing a late piece, entitled "THE ANCIENT TESTIMONY *and* PRINCIPLES *of the people called* QUAKERS *renewed, with respect to the* KING *and* GOVERNMENT, *and touching the* COMMOTIONS *now prevailing in these and other parts of* AMERICA, *addressed to the* PEOPLE IN GENERAL."

THE writer of this is one of those few who never dishonors religion, either by ridiculing or cavilling at any denomination whatsoever. To God, and not to man, are all men accountable on the score of religion. Wherefore, this epistle is not so properly addressed to you as a religious, but as a political body, dabbling in matters which the professed quietude of your principles instruct you not to meddle with.

As you have, without a proper authority for so doing, put yourselves in the place of the whole body of the Quakers, so the writer of this, in order to be on an equal rank with yourselves, is under the necessity of putting himself in the place of all those who approve the very writings and principles against which your Testimony is directed: and he hath chosen this singular situation, in order that you might discover in him, that presumption of character which you cannot see in yourselves.

For neither he nor you have any claim or title to *Political Representation.*

When men have departed from the right way, it is no wonder that they stumble and fall. And it is evident from the manner in which ye have managed your Testimony, that politics (as a religious body of men) is not your proper walk ; for however well adapted it may appear to you, it is, nevertheless, a jumble of good and bad put unwisely together, and the conclusion drawn therefrom both unnatural and unjust.

The two first pages (and the whole doth not make four) we give you credit for, and expect the same civility from you, because the love and desire of peace is not confined to Quakerism, it is the *natural*, as well as the religious wish of all denominations of men. And on this ground, as men laboring to establish an Independent Constitution of our own, do we exceed all others in our hope, end, and aim. *Our plan is peace forever.* We are tired of contention with Britain, and can see no real end to it but in a final separation. We act consistently, because, for the sake of introducing an endless and uninterrupted peace, do we bear the evils and burdens of the present day. We are endeavoring, and will steadily continue to endeavor, to separate and dissolve a connection which has already filled our land with blood ; and which, while the name of it remains, will be the fatal cause of future mischiefs to both countries.

We fight neither for revenge nor conquest ; neither from pride nor passion ; we are not insulting the world with our fleets and armies, nor ravaging the globe for plunder. Beneath the shade of our own vines we are attacked ; in our own houses, and on our own lands, is the violence committed against us. We view our enemies in the characters of highwaymen and housebreakers, and having no defence for ourselves in the civil law, are obliged to punish them by the military one, and apply

the sword in the very case where you have before now applied the halter. Perhaps we feel for the ruined and insulted sufferers in all and every part of the continent, with a degree of tenderness which hath not yet made its way into some of your bosoms. But be ye sure that ye mistake not the cause and ground of your Testimony. Call not the coldness of the soul religion; nor put the *bigot* in the place of the *Christian*.

O ye partial ministers of your own acknowledged principles! If the bearing of arms be sinful, the first going to war must be more so, by all the difference between willful attack and unavoidable defence.

Wherefore, if ye really preach from conscience, and mean not to make a political hobby-horse of your religion, convince the world thereof by proclaiming your doctrine to our enemies, *for they likewise bear* ARMS. Give us proof of your sincerity by publishing it at St. James's, to the commanders-in-chief at Boston, to the admirals and captains who are piratically ravaging our coasts, and to all the murdering miscreants who are acting in authority under HIM whom ye profess to serve. Had ye the honest soul of Barclay* ye would preach repentance to *your* king; ye would tell the royal tyrant of his sins, and warn him of eternal ruin. Ye would not spend your partial invectives against the injured and insulted only, but, like faithful ministers, would cry aloud and *spare none*. Say not that ye are persecuted, neither endeavor to make us the authors or that reproach which ye are

* "Thou hast tasted of prosperity and adversity! thou knowest what it is to be banished thy native country, to be overruled as well as to rule, and set upon the throne; and being oppressed, thou hast reason to know how hateful the oppressor is both to God and man. If after all these warnings and advertisements, thou dost not turn unto the Lord with all thy heart, but forget him who remembered thee in thy distress, and give up thyself to follow lust and vanity, surely great will be thy condemnation: against which snare, as well as the temptation of those who may or do feed thee, and prompt thee to evil, the most excellent and prevalent remedy will be to apply thyself to that light of Christ which shineth in the conscience, and which neither can, nor will flatter thee, nor suffer thee to be at ease in thy sins."—*Barclay's Address to Charles II.*

bringing upon yourselves; for we testify unto all men, that we do not complain against you because ye are *Quakers*, but because ye pretend *to be* and are NOT Quakers.

Alas! it seems by the particular tendency of some part of your Testimony, and other parts of your conduct, as if all sin was reduced to, and comprehended in, *the act of bearing arms*, and that by the *people only*. Ye appear to us to have mistaken party for conscience; because the general tenor of your actions wants uniformity; and it is exceedingly difficult for us to give credit to many of your pretended scruples; because we see them made by the same men, who, in the very instant that they are exclaiming against the mammon of this world, are nevertheless hunting after it with a step as steady as Time, and an appetite as keen as Death.

The quotation which ye have from Proverbs, in the third page of your Testimony, that, "when a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him;" is very unwisely chosen on your part; because it amounts to a proof that the king's ways (whom ye are so desirous of supporting) do *not* please the Lord, otherwise his reign would be in peace.

I now proceed to the latter part of your Testimony, and that for which all the foregoing seems only an introduction, viz.:

"It hath ever been our judgment and principle, since we were called to profess the light of Christ Jesus, manifested in our consciences unto this day, that the setting up and putting down kings and governments, is God's peculiar prerogative; for causes best known to himself: and that it is not our business to have any hand or contrivance therein; nor to be busy-bodies above our station, much less to plot and contrive the ruin, or overturn any of them, but to pray for the king, and safety of our nation, and good of all men: that we may live a peace-

ful and quiet life in all godliness and honesty ; *under the government which God is pleased to set over us.*" If these are really your principles why do ye not abide by them? Why do ye not leave that which ye call God's work to be managed by himself? These very principles instruct you to wait with patience and humility for the event of all public measures, and to receive *that event* as the divine will towards you. Wherefore, what occasion is there for your *political Testimony*, if you fully believe what it contains? And, therefore, publishing it proves that either ye do not believe what ye profess, or have not virtue enough to practice what ye believe.

The principles of Quakerism have a direct tendency to make a man the quiet and inoffensive subject of any and every government *which is set over him.* And if the setting up and putting down of kings and governments is God's peculiar prerogative, he most certainly will not be robbed thereof by us ; wherefore, the principle itself leads you to approve of everything which ever happened or may happen to kings, as being his work. Oliver Cromwell thanks you. Charles, then, died not by the hands of man ; and should the present proud imitator of him come to the same untimely end, the writers and publishers of the Testimony are bound by the doctrine it contains to applaud the fact. Kings are not taken away by miracles, neither are changes in governments brought about by any other means than such as are common and human ; and such as we are now using. Even the dispersing of the Jews, though foretold by our Saviour, was effected by arms. Wherefore, as ye refuse to be the means on one side, ye ought not to be meddlers on the other ; but to wait the issue in silence ; and, unless ye can produce divine authority to prove that the Almighty, who hath created and placed this *new* world at the greatest distance it could possibly stand, east and west, from every part of the old, doth, nevertheless, disapprove

of its being independent of the corrupt and abandoned court of Britain; unless, I say, ye can show this, how can ye, on the ground of your principles, justify the exciting and stirring up the people "firmly to unite in the *abhorrence* of all such *writings*, and *measures*, as evince a desire and design to break off the *happy* connection we have hitherto enjoyed with the kingdom of Great Britain, and our just and necessary subordination to the king, and those who are lawfully placed in authority under him." What a slap in the face is here! the men who, in the very paragraph before, have quietly and passively resigned up the ordering, altering and disposal of kings and goverments into the hands of God, are now recalling their principles, and putting in for a share of the business. Is it possible that the conclusion, which is here justly quoted, can any ways follow from the doctrine laid down? The inconsistency is too glaring not to be seen; the absurdity too great not to be laughed at; and such as could only have been made by those whose understandings were darkened by the narrow and crabbed spirit of a despairing political party; for ye are not to be considered as the whole body of Quakers, but only as a factional and fractional part thereof.

Here ends the examination of your testimony; (which I call upon no man to abhor, as ye have done, but only to read and judge of fairly); to which I subjoin the following remark: "That the setting up and putting down of kings" must certainly mean the making him a king, who is yet not so, and the making him no king who is already one. And pray what hath this to do in the present case? We neither mean to *set up* nor to *put down*, neither to *make* nor to *unmake*, but to have nothing *to do* with them. Wherefore, your Testimony, in whatever light it is viewed, serves only to dishonor your judgment, and for many other reasons had better have been left alone than published.

First. Because it tends to the decrease and reproach of all religion whatever, and is of the utmost danger to society, to make it a party in political disputes.

Secondly. Because it exhibits a body of men, numbers of whom disavow the publishing of political testimonies, as being concerned therein and approvers thereof.

Thirdly. Because it hath a tendency to undo that continental harmony and friendship which yourselves, by your late liberal and charitable donations, have lent a hand to establish ; and the preservation of which is of the utmost consequence to us all.

And here, without anger or resentment, I bid you farewell. Sincerely wishing, that as men and Christians, ye may always fully and uninterruptedly enjoy every civil and religious right ; and be in your turn the means of securing it to others ; but that the example which ye have unwisely set, of mingling religion with politics, *may be disavowed and reprobated by every inhabitant of* AMERICA.

THE CRISIS.

BY

THOMAS PAINE,

SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE WAR OF THE REVOLUTION, AND AUTHOR OF THE WORKS ENTITLED "COMMON SENSE," "RIGHTS OF MAN," "AGE OF REASON," ETC.

"These are the times that try men's souls."

NEW YORK:
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THE CRISIS.

NUMBER I.

THESE are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it NOW, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: 'tis dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed, if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated. Britain, with an army to enforce her tyranny, has declared that she has a right (*not only to* TAX) but "to BIND *us in* ALL CASES WHATSOEVER," and if being *bound in that manner*, is not slavery, then is there not such a thing as slavery upon earth. Even the expression is impious, for so unlimited a power can belong only to God.

Whether the independence of the continent was declared too soon, or delayed too long, I will not now enter into as an argument; my own simple opinion is, that had it been eight months earlier, it would have been much better. We did not make a proper use of last winter, neither could we, while we were in a dependant state. However, the fault, if it were one, was all our own; we have none to blame but ourselves. But no great deal is lost yet; all that Howe has been doing for this month past, is rather á ravage than a conquest, which the spirit

of the Jerseys a year ago would have quickly repulsed, and which time and a little resolution will soon recover.

I have as little superstition in me as any man living, but my secret opinion has ever been, and still is, that God Almighty will not give up a people to military destruction, or leave them unsupportedly to perish, who have so earnestly and so repeatedly sought to avoid the calamities of war, by every decent method which wisdom could invent. Neither have I so much of the infidel in me, as to suppose that He has relinquished the government of the world, and given us up to the care of devils; and as I do not, I cannot see on what grounds the king of Britain can look up to heaven for help against us: a common murderer, a highwayman, or a house-breaker, has as good a pretence as he.

'Tis surprising to see how rapidly a panic will sometimes run through a country. All nations and ages have been subject to them: Britain has trembled like an ague at the report of a French fleet of flat bottomed boats; and in the fourteenth century the whole English army, after ravaging the kingdom of France, was driven back like men petrified with fear; and this brave exploit was performed by a few broken forces collected and headed by a woman, Joan of Arc. Would that heaven might inspire some Jersey maid to spirit up her countrymen, and save her fair fellow sufferers from ravage and ravishment! Yet panics, in some cases, have their uses; they produce as much good as hurt. Their duration is always short; the mind soon grows through them, and acquires a firmer habit than before. But their peculiar advantage is, that they are the touchstones of sincerity and hypocrisy, and bring things and men to light, which might otherwise have lain forever undiscovered. In fact, they have the same effect on secret traitors, which an imaginary apparition would have upon a private murderer. They sift out the hidden thoughts of man, and hold

them up in public to the world. Many a disguised tory has lately shown his head, that shall penitentially solemnize with curses the day on which Howe arrived upon the Delaware.

As I was with the troops at Fort Lee, and marched with them to the edge of Pennsylvania, I am well acquainted with many circumstances, which those who live at a distance, know but little or nothing of. Our situation there was exceedingly cramped, the place being a narrow neck of land between the North River and the Hackensack. Our force was inconsiderable, being not one-fourth so great as Howe could bring against us. We had no army at hand to have relieved the garrison, had we shut ourselves up and stood on the defence. Our ammunition, light artillery, and the best part of our stores, had been removed, on the apprehension that Howe would endeavor to penetrate the Jerseys, in which case Fort Lee could be of no use to us; for it must occur to every thinking man, whether in the army or not, that these kind of field forts are only for temporary purposes, and last in use no longer than the enemy directs his force against the particular object, which such forts are raised to defend. Such was our situation and condition at Fort Lee on the morning of the 20th of November, when an officer arrived with information that the enemy with two hundred boats had landed about seven or eight miles above: Major General Green, who commanded the garrison, immediately ordered them under arms, and sent express to his excellency, General Washington, at the town of Hackensack, distant by the way of the ferry, six miles. Our first object was to secure the bridge over the Hackensack, which laid up the river between the enemy and us, about six miles from us, and three miles from them. General Washington arrived in about three-quarters of an hour, and marched at the head of the troops towards the bridge, which place

I expected we should have a brush for; however, they did not choose to dispute it with us, and the greatest part of our troops went over the bridge, the rest over the ferry, except some which passed at a mill on a small creek, between the bridge and the ferry, and made their way through some marshy grounds up to the town of Hackensack, and there passed the river. We brought off as much baggage as the wagons could contain, the rest was lost. The simple object was to bring off the garrison, and to march them on till they could be strengthened by the Jersey or Pennsylvania militia, so as to be enabled to make a stand. We staid four days at Newark, collected in our out-posts with some Jersey militia, and marched out twice to meet the enemy, on being informed that they were advancing, though our numbers were greatly inferior to theirs. Howe, in my little opinion, committed a great error in generalship in not throwing a body of forces off from Staten Island through Amboy, by which means he might have seized all our stores at Brunswick, and intercepted our march into Pennsylvania: but if we believe the power of hell to be limited, we must likewise believe that their agents are under some providential control.

I shall not now attempt to give all the particulars of our retreat to the Delaware; suffice it for the present to say, that both officers and men, though greatly harrassed and fatigued, frequently without rest, covering, or provision, the inevitable consequences of a long retreat, bore it with a manly and martial spirit. All their wishes centered in one, which was, that the country would turn out and help them to drive the enemy back. Voltaire has remarked that King William never appeared to full advantage but in difficulties and in action; the same remark may be made on General Washington, for the character fits him. There is a natural firmness in some minds which cannot be unlocked by trifles, but

which, when unlocked, discovers a cabinet of fortitude; and I reckon it among those kind of public blessings, which we do not immediately see, that God hath blest him with uninterrupted health, and given him a mind that can even flourish upon care.

I shall conclude this paper with some miscellaneous remarks on the state of our affairs; and shall begin with asking the following question: Why is it that the enemy have left the New England provinces, and made these middle ones the seat of war? The answer is easy: New England is not infested with tories, and we are. I have been tender in raising the cry against these men, and used numberless arguments to show them their danger, but it will not do to sacrifice a world to either their folly or their baseness. The period is now arrived, in which either they or we must change our sentiments, or one or both must fall. And what is a tory? Good God! what is he? I should not be afraid to go with a hundred whigs against a thousand tories, were they to attempt to get into arms. Every tory is a coward; for servile, slavish, self-interested fear is the foundation of toryism; and a man under such influence, though he may be cruel, never can be brave.

But, before the line of irrecoverable separation be drawn between us, let us reason the matter together: your conduct is an invitation to the enemy, yet not one in a thousand of you has heart enough to join him. Howe is as much deceived by you as the American cause is injured by you. He expects you will all take up arms, and flock to his standard, with muskets on your shoulders. Your opinions are of no use to him, unless you support him personally, for 'tis soldiers, and not tories, that he wants.

I once felt all that kind of anger, which a man ought to feel, against the mean principles that are held by the tories: a noted one, who kept a tavern at Amboy, was

standing at his door, with as pretty a child in his hand, about eight or nine years old, as I ever saw, and after speaking his mind as freely as he thought was prudent, finished with this unfatherly expression, "*Well! give me peace in my day.*" Not a man lives on the continent but fully believes that a separation must some time or other finally take place, and a generous parent should have said, "*If there must be trouble, let it be in my day, that my child may have peace;*" and this single reflection, well applied, is sufficient to awaken every man to duty. Not a place upon earth might be so happy as America. Her situation is remote from all the wangling world, and she has nothing to do but to trade with them. A man can easily distinguish in himself between temper and principle, and I am as confident, as I am that God governs the world, that America will never be happy till she gets clear of foreign dominion. Wars, without ceasing, will break out till that period arrives, and the continent must in the end be conqueror; for though the flame of liberty may sometimes cease to shine, the coal can never expire.

America did not, nor does not want force; but she wanted a proper application of that force. Wisdom is not the purchase of a day, and it is no wonder that we should err at the first setting off. From an excess of tenderness, we were unwilling to raise an army, and trusted our cause to the temporary defence of a well-meaning militia. A summer's experience has now taught us better; yet with those troops, while they were collected, we were able to set bounds to the progress of the enemy, and, thank God! they are again assembling. I always considered militia as the best troops in the world for a sudden exertion, but they will not do for a long campaign. Howe, it is probable, will make an attempt on this city; should he fail on this side the Delaware, he is ruined: if he succeeds, our cause is no

ruined. He stakes all on his side against a part on ours; admitting he succeeds, the consequence will be, that armies from both ends of the continent will march to assist their suffering friends in the middle states; for he cannot go every where; it is impossible. I consider Howe as the greatest enemy the tories have; he is bringing a war into their country, which, had it not been for him and partly for themselves, they had been clear of. Should he now be expelled, I wish with all the devotion of a Christian, that the names of whig and tory may never more be mentioned; but should the tories give him encouragement to come, or assistance if he come, I as sincerely wish that our next year's arms may expel them from the continent, and the congress appropriate their possessions to the relief of those who have suffered in well-doing. A single successful battle next year, will settle the whole. America could carry on a two years war by the confiscation of the property of disaffected persons, and be made happy by their expulsion. Say not that this is revenge, call it rather the soft resentment of a suffering people, who, having no object in view but the *good* of *all*, have staked their *own all* upon a seemingly doubtful event. Yet it is folly to argue against determined hardness; eloquence may strike the ear, and the language of sorrow draw forth the tear of compassion, but nothing can reach the heart that is steeled with prejudice.

Quitting this class of men, I turn with the warm ardor of a friend to those who have nobly stood, and are yet determined to stand the matter out: I call not upon a few, but upon all: not on *this* state or *that* state, but on *every* state; up and help us; lay your shoulders to the wheel; better have too much force than too little, when so great an object is at stake. Let it be told to the future world, that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive, that the city and the

country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet and to repulse it. Say not that thousands are gone, turn out your tens of thousands; throw not the burden of the day upon Providence, but "*show your faith by your works*," that God may bless you. It matters not where you live, or what rank of life you hold, the evil or the blessing will reach you all. The far and the near, the home counties and the back, the rich and the poor, will suffer or rejoice alike. The heart that feels not now, is dead: the blood of his children will curse his cowardice, who shrinks back at a time when a little might have saved the whole, and made *them* happy. I love the man that can smile in trouble, that can gather strength from distress, and grow brave by reflection. 'Tis the business of little minds to shrink; but he whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves his conduct, will pursue his principles unto death. My own line of reasoning is to myself as straight and clear as a ray of light. Not all the treasures of the world, so far as I believe, could have induced me to support an offensive war, for I think it murder; but if a thief breaks into my house, burns and destroys my property, and kills or threatens to kill me, or those that are in it, and to "*bind me in all cases whatsoever*," to his absolute will, am I to suffer it? What signifies it to me, whether he who does it is a king or a common man; my countryman or not my countryman: whether it be done by an individual villain, or an army of them? If we reason to the root of things we shall find no difference; neither can any just cause be assigned why we should punish in the one case and pardon in the other. Let them call me rebel, and welcome, I feel no concern from it; but I should suffer the misery of devils, were I to make a whore of my soul by swearing allegiance to one whose character is that of a sottish, stupid, stubborn, worthless, brutish man. I conceive likewise a horrid idea in receiving mercy from a being, who at

the last day shall be shrieking to the rocks and mountains to cover him, and fleeing with terror from the orphan, the widow, and the slain of America.

There are cases which cannot be overdone by language, and this is one. There are persons too who see not the full extent of the evil which threatens them, they solace themselves with hopes that the enemy, if they succeed, will be merciful. It is the madness of folly, to expect mercy from those who have refused to do justice; and even mercy, where conquest is the object, is only a trick of war; the cunning of the fox is as murderous as the violence of the wolf; and we ought to guard equally against both. Howe's first object is partly by threats and partly by promises, to terrify or seduce the people to deliver up their arms and receive mercy. The ministry recommended the same plan to Gage, and this is what the tories call making their peace, "*a peace which passeth all understanding*" *indeed!* A peace which would be the immediate forerunner of a worse ruin than any we have yet thought of. Ye men of Pennsylvania, do reason upon these things! Were the back counties to give up their arms, they would fall an easy prey to the Indians, who are all armed: this perhaps is what some tories would not be sorry for. Were the home counties to deliever up their arms, they would be exposed to the resentment of the back counties, who would then have it in their power to chastise their defection at pleasure. And were any one state to give up its arms, *that* state must be garrisoned by all Howe's army of Britons and Hessians to preserve it from the anger of the rest. Mutual fear is the principal link in the chain of mutual love, and woe be to that state that breaks the compact. Howe is mercifully inviting you to barbarous destruction, and men must be either rogues or fools that will not see it.

I dwell not upon the powers of imagination; I bring

reason to your ears; and in language as plain as A, B, C, hold up truth to your eyes.

I thank God that I fear not. I see no real cause for fear. I know our situation well, and can see the way out of it. While our army was collected, Howe dared not risk a battle, and it is no credit to him that he decamped from the White Plains, and waited a mean opportunity to ravage the defenceless Jerseys; but it is great credit to us, that, with a handful of men, we sustained an orderly retreat for near an hundred miles, brought off our ammunition, all our field pieces, the greatest part of our stores, and had four rivers to pass. None can say that our retreat was precipitate, for we were near three weeks in performing it, that the country might have time to come in. Twice we marched back to meet the enemy, and remained out till dark. The sign of fear was not seen in our camp, and had not some of the cowardly and disaffected inhabitants spread false alarms through the country, the Jerseys had never been ravaged. Once more we are again collected and collecting, our new army at both ends of the continent is recruiting fast, and we shall be able to open the next campaign with sixty thousand men, well armed and clothed. This is our situation, and who will may know it. By perseverance and fortitude we have the prospect of a glorious issue; by cowardice and submission, the sad choice of a variety of evils—a ravaged country—a depopulated city—habitations without safety, and slavery without hope—our homes turned into barracks and bawdy-houses for Hessians, and a future race to provide for, whose fathers we shall doubt of. Look on this picture and weep over it! and if there yet remains one thoughtless wretch who believes it not, let him suffer it unlamented.

COMMON SENSE.

December 23, 1776.

THE CRISIS.

NUMBER II.

TO LORD HOWE.

What's in the name of *lord* that I should fear
To bring my grievance to the public ear?—*Churchill.*

UNIVERSAL empire is the prerogative of a writer. His concerns are with all mankind, and though he cannot command their obedience, he can assign them their duty. The Republic of Letters is more ancient than monarchy, and of far higher character in the world than the vassal court of Britain; he that rebels against reason is a real rebel, but he that in defence of reason, rebels against tyranny, has a better title to "*Defender of the Faith*," than George the third.

As a military man your lordship may hold out the sword of war, and call it the "*ultima ratio regum:*" *the last reason of Kings;* we in return can show you the sword of justice, and call it, "the best scourge of tyrants." The first of these two may threaten, or even frighten for a while, and cast a sickly langor over an insulted people, but reason will soon recover the debauch, and restore them again to tranquil fortitude. Your lordship, I find, has now commenced author, and published a *Proclamation*: I have published a *Crisis*; as they stand, they are the antipodes of each other; both cannot rise at once, and one of them must descend; and so quick is the revolution of things, that your lordship's performance, I see, has already fallen many degrees from its first place, and is now just visible on the edge of the political horizon.

It is surprising to what a pitch of infatuation, blind folly and obstinacy will carry mankind, and your lordship's drowsy proclamation is a proof that it does not even quit them in their sleep. Perhaps you thought America too was taking a nap, and therefore chose, like Satan to Eve, to whisper the delusion softly, lest you should awaken her. This continent sir, is too extensive to sleep all at once, and too watchful, even in its slumbers, not to startle at the unhallowed foot of an invader. You may issue your proclamations, and welcome, for we have learned to "reverence ourselves," and scorn the insulting ruffian that employs you. America, for your deceased brother's sake, would gladly have shown you respect, and it is a new aggravation to her feelings, that Howe should be forgetful, and raise his sword against those, who at their own charge raised a monument to his brother. But your master has commanded, and you have not enough of nature left to refuse. Surely! there must be something strangely degenerating in the love of monarchy, that can so completely wear a man down to an ingrate, and make him proud to lick the dust that kings have trod upon. A few more years, should you survive them, will bestow on you the title of "an old man:" and in some hour of future reflection you may probably find the fitness of Wolsey's despairing penitence—"had I served my God as faithfully as I have served my king, he would not thus have forsaken me in my old age."

The character you appear to us in is truly ridiculous. Your friends, the tories, announced your coming, with high descriptions of your unlimited powers; but your proclamation has given them the lie, by showing you to be a commissioner without authority. Had your powers been ever so great, they were nothing to us, further than we pleased; because we had the same right which other nations had, to do what we thought was best. "*The* UNITED STATES *of* AMERICA," will sound as pompously

in the world or in history, as "the Kingdom of Great Britain;" the character of *General Washington* will fill a page with as much lustre as that of *Lord Howe:* and the *congress* have as much right to command the *king and parliament* in London to desist from legislation, as *they* or *you* have to command the congress. Only suppose how laughable such an edict would appear from us, and then, in that merry mood, do but turn the tables upon yourself, and you will see how your proclamation is received here. Having thus placed you in a proper position in which you may have a full view of your folly, and learn to despise it, I hold up to you, for that purpose, the following quotation from your own lunarian proclamation.—"And we (Lord Howe and General Howe) do command (and in his majesty's name forsooth) all such persons as are assembled together, under the name of general or provincial congresses, committees, conventions or other associations, by whatever name or names known and distinguished, to desist and cease from all such treasonable actings and doings."

You introduce your proclamation by referring to your declarations of the 14th of July and 19th of September. In the last of these, you sunk yourself below the character of a private gentleman. That I may not seem to accuse you unjustly, I shall state the circumstance: by a verbal invitation of yours, communicated to congress by General Sullivan, then a prisoner on his parole, you signified your desire of conferring with some members of that body as private gentlemen. It was beneath the dignity of the American congress to pay any regard to a message that at best was but a genteel affront, and had too much of the ministerial complexion of tampering with private persons; and which might probably have been the case, had the gentlemen who were deputed on the business, possessed that kind of easy virtue which an English courtier is so truly distinguished by. Your request, how-

ever, was complied with, for honest men are naturally more tender of their civil than their political fame. The interview ended as every sensible man thought it would; for your lordship knows, as well as the writer of the *Crisis*, that it is impossible for the king of England to promise the repeal, or even the revisal of any acts of parliament; wherefore, on your part, you had nothing to say, more than to request, in the room of demanding, the entire surrender of the continent; and then, if that was complied with, to promise that the inhabitants should escape with their lives. This was the upshot of the conference. You informed the conferees that you were two months in soliciting these powers. We ask, what powers? for as commissioner you have none. If you mean the power of pardoning, it is an oblique proof that your master was determined to sacrifice all before him; and that you were two months in dissuading him from his purpose. Another evidence of his savage obstinacy! From your own account of the matter we may justly draw these two conclusions: 1st, That you serve a monster; and 2d, That never was a messenger sent on a more foolish errand than yourself. This plain language may perhaps sound uncouthly to an ear vitiated by courtly refinements; but words were made for use, and the fault lies in deserving them, or the abuse in applying them unfairly.

Soon after your return to New York, you published a very illiberal and unmanly handbill against the congress; for it was certainly stepping out of the line of common civility, first to screen your national pride by soliciting an interview with them as private gentlemen, and in the conclusion to endeavor to deceive the multitude by making a handbill attack on the whole body of the congress; you got them together under one name, and abused them under another. But the king you serve, and the cause you support, afford you so few instances of

acting the gentleman, that out of pity to your situation the congress pardoned the insult by taking no notice of it.

You say in that handbill, "that they, the congress, disavowed every purpose for reconciliation not consonant with their extravagant and inadmissible claim of independence." Why, God bless me! what have you to do with our independence? We ask no leave of yours to set it up; we ask no money of yours to support it; we can do better without your fleets and armies than with them; you may soon have enough to do to protect yourselves without being burdened with us. We are very willing to be at peace with you, to buy of you and sell to you, and, like young beginners in the world, to work for our living; therefore, why do you put yourselves out of cash, when we know you cannot spare it, and we do not desire you to run into debt? I am willing, sir, you should see your folly in every point of view I can place it in, and for that reason descend sometimes to tell you in jest what I wish you to see in earnest. But to be more serious with you, why do you say, "their independence?" To set you right, sir, we tell you, that the independency is ours, not theirs. The congress were authorized by every state on the continent to publish it to all the world, and in so doing are not to be considered as the inventors, but only as the heralds that proclaimed it, or the office from which the sense of the people received a legal form; and it was as much as any or all their heads were worth, to have treated with you on the subject of submission under any name whatever. But we know the men in whom we have trusted; can England say the same of her parliament?

I come now more particularly to your proclamation of the 30th of November last. Had you gained an entire conquest over all the armies of America, and then put forth a proclamation, offering (what you call) mercy, your conduct would have had some specious show of

humanity; but to creep by surprise into a province, and there endeavor to terrify and seduce the inhabitants from their just allegiance to the rest by promises, which you neither meant, nor were able to fulfill, is both cruel and unmanly: cruel in its effects; because, unless you can keep all the ground you have marched over, how are you, in the words of your proclamation, to secure to your proselytes "the enjoyment of their property?" What is to become either of your new adopted subjects, or your old friends, the tories, in Burlington, Bordentown, Trenton, Mountholly, and many other places, where you proudly lorded it for a few days, and then fled with the precipitation of a pursued thief? What, I say, is to become of those wretches? What is to become of those who went over to you from this city and state? What more can you say to them than "shift for yourselves?" Or what more can they hope for than to wander like vagabonds over the face of the earth? You may now tell them to take their leave of America, and all that once was theirs. Recommend them, for consolation, to your master's court; there perhaps they may make a shift to live on the scraps of some dangling parasite, and choose companions among thousands like themselves. A traitor is the foulest fiend on earth.

In a political sense we ought to thank you for thus bequeathing estates to the continent; we shall soon, at this rate, be able to carry on a war without expense, and grow rich by the ill policy of Lord Howe, and the generous defection of the tories. Had you set your foot into this city, you would have bestowed estates upon us which we never thought of, by bringing forth traitors we were unwilling to suspect. But these men, you'll say, "are his majesty's most faithful subjects;" let that honor, then, be all their fortune, and let his majesty take them to himself.

I am now thoroughly disgusted with them; they live

in ungrateful ease, and bend their whole minds to mischief. It seems as if God had given them over to a spirit of infidelity, and that they are open to conviction in no other line but that of punishment. It is time to have done with tarring, feathering, carting, and taking securities for their future good behavior; every sensible man must feel a conscious shame at seeing a poor fellow hawked for a show about the streets, when it is known he is only the tool of some principal villain, biassed into his offence by the force of false reasoning, or bribed thereto, through sad necessity. We dishonor ourselves by attacking such trifling characters while greater ones are suffered to escape; 'tis our duty to find *them* out, and their proper punishment would be to exile them from the continent for ever. The circle of them is not so great as some imagine; the influence of a few have tainted many who are not naturally corrupt. A continual circulation of lies among those who are not much in the way of hearing them contradicted, will in time pass for truth; and the crime lies not in the believer but the inventor. I am not for declaring war with every man that appears not so warm as myself: difference of constitution, temper, habit of speaking, and many other things, will go a great way in fixing the outward character of a man, yet simple honesty may remain at bottom. Some men have naturally a military turn, and can brave hardships and the risk of life with a cheerful face; others have not; no slavery appears to them so great as the fatigue of arms, and no terror so powerful as that of personal danger. What can we say? We cannot alter nature, neither ought we to punish the son because the father begot him in a cowardly mood. However, I believe most men have more courage than they know of, and that a little at first is enough to begin with. I knew the time when I thought that the whistling of a cannon ball would have frightened me almost to death: but I

have since tried it, and find that I can stand it with as little discomposure, and, I believe, with a much easier conscience than your lordship. The same dread would return to me again were I in your situation, for my solemn belief of your cause is, that it is hellish and damnable, and, under that conviction, every thinking man's heart *must* fail him.

From a concern that a good cause should be dishonored by the least disunion among us, I said in my former paper, No. 1. "That should the enemy now be expelled, I wish, with all the sincerity of a Christian, that the names of whig and tory might never more be mentioned," but there is a knot of men among us of such a venomous cast, that they will not admit even one's good wishes to act in their favor. Instead of rejoicing that heaven had, as it were, providentially preserved this city from plunder and destruction, by delivering so great a part of the enemy into our hands with so little effusion of blood, they stubbornly affected to disbelieve it till within an hour, nay, half an hour, of the prisoners arriving; and the Quakers put forth a testimony, dated the 20th of December, signed "John Pemberton," declaring their attachment to the British government.* These men are continually harping on the great sin of *our* bearing arms, but the king of Britain may lay waste the world in blood and famine, and they, poor fallen souls, have nothing to say.

In some future paper I intend to distinguish between the different kind of persons who have been denominated tories; for this I am clear in, that all are not so who have been called so, nor all men whigs who were once

* I have ever been careful of charging offences upon whole societies of men, but as the paper referred to is put forth by an unknown set of men, who claim to themselves the right of representing the whole: and while the whole society of Quakers admit its validity by a silent acknowledgment, it is impossible that any distinction can be made by the public: and the more so, because the New York paper of the 30th of December, printed by permission of our enemies, says that "the Quakers begin to speak openly of their attachment to the British constitution." We are certain that we have many friends among them, and wish to know them.

thought so; and as I mean not to conceal the name of any true friend when there shall be occasion to mention him, neither will I that of an enemy, who ought to be known, let his rank, station or religion be what it may. Much pains have been taken by some to set your lordship's private character in an amiable light, but as it has chiefly been done by men who know nothing about you, and who are no ways remarkable for their attachment to us, we have no just authority for believing it. George the third has imposed upon us by the same arts, but *time*, at length, has done him justice, and the same fate may probably attend your lordship. Your avowed purpose here, is to kill, conquer, plunder, pardon, and enslave: and the ravages of your army through the Jerseys have been marked with as much barbarism as if you had openly professed yourself the prince of ruffians; not even the appearance of humanity has been preserved either on the march or the retreat of your troops; no general order that I could ever learn, has ever been issued to prevent or even forbid your troops from robbery, wherever they came; and the only instance of justice, if it can be called such, which has distinguished you for impartiality, is, that you treated and plundered all alike: what could not be carried away has been destroyed, and mahogany furniture has been deliberately laid on fire for fuel, rather than the men should be fatigued with cutting wood.* There was a time when the whigs confided much in your supposed candor, and the tories rested themselves in your favor; the experiments have now been made, and failed; in every town, nay, every cottage, in the Jerseys, where your arms have been, is a testimony against you. How you may rest under this sacrifice of character I know not; but this I know, that you sleep

* As some people may doubt the truth of such wanton destruction, I think it necessary to inform them, that one of the people called Quakers, who lives at Trenton, gave me this information, at the house of Mr. Michael Hutchinson, (one of the same profession,) who lives near Trenton ferry on the Pennsylvania side, Mr. Hutchinson being present.

and rise with the daily curses of thousands upon you: perhaps the misery which the tories have suffered by your proffered mercy, may give them some claim to their country's pity, and be in the end the best favor you could show them.

In a folio general-order book belonging to Col. Rhol's battalion, taken at Trenton, and now in the possession of the council of safety for the state, the following barbarous order is frequently repeated: "His excellency the *commander-in-chief* orders, that all inhabitants who shall be found with arms, not having an officer with them, shall be immediately taken and hung up." How many you may thus have privately sacrificed, we know not, and the account can only be settled in another world. Your treatment of prisoners, in order to distress them to enlist into your infernal service, is not to be equalled by any instance in Europe. Yet this is the humane Lord Howe and his brother, whom the tories and their three-quarter kindred, the Quakers, or some of them at least, have been holding up for patterns of justice and mercy!

A bad cause will ever be supported by bad means and bad men; and whoever will be at the pains of examining strictly into things, will find that one and the same spirit of oppression and impiety, more or less, governs through your whole party in both countries. Not many days ago, I accidentally fell in company with a person of this city noted for espousing your cause, and on my remarking to him, "that it appeared clear to me, by the late providential turn of affairs, that God Almighty was visible on our side," he replied, "We care nothing for that, you may have Him, and welcome; if we have but enough of the devil on our side, we shall do." However carelessly this might be spoken, matters not, 'tis still the insensible principle that directs all your conduct, and will at last most assuredly deceive and ruin you.

If ever a nation was mad and foolish, blind to its own

interest and bent on its own destruction, it is Britain. There are such things as national sins, and though the punishment of individuals may be reserved to *another* world, national punishment can only be inflicted in *this* world. Britain, as a nation, is, in my inmost belief, the greatest and most ungrateful offender against God on the face of the whole earth: blessed with all the commerce she could wish for, and furnished, by a vast extension of dominion, with the means of civilizing both the eastern and western world, she has made no other use of both than proudly to idolize her own "thunder," and rip up the bowels of whole countries for what she could get. Like Alexander, she has made war her sport, and inflicted misery for prodigality's sake. The blood of India is not yet repaid, nor the wretchedness of Africa yet requited. Of late she has enlarged her list of national cruelties, by her butcherly destruction of the Caribs of St. Vincents, and returning an answer by the sword to the meek prayer for "*Peace, liberty and safety.*" These are serious things, and whatever a foolish tyrant, a debauched court, a trafficing legislature, or a blinded people may think, the national account with heaven must some day or other be settled: all countries have sooner or later been called to their reckoning; the proudest empires have sunk when the balance was struck; and Britain, like an individual penitent, must undergo her day of sorrow, and the sooner it happens to her the better: as I wish it over, I wish it to come, but withal wish that it may be as light as possible.

Perhaps your lordship has no taste for serious things; by your connexions in England I should suppose not: therefore I shall drop this part of the subject, and take it up in a line in which you will better understand me.

By what means, may I ask, do you expect to conquer America? If you could not effect it in the summer, when our army was less than yours, nor in the winter,

when we had none, how are you to do it? In point of generalship you have been outwitted, and in point of fortitude outdone: your advantages turn out to your loss, and show us that it is in our power to ruin you by gifts: like a game of drafts, we can move out of *one* square to let you come in, in order that we may afterwards take two or three for one; and as we can always keep a double corner for ourselves, we can always prevent a total defeat. You cannot be so insensible, as not to see that we have two to one the advantage of you, because we conquer by a drawn game, and you lose by it. Burgoyne might have taught your lordship this knowledge; he has been long a student in the doctrine of chances.

I have no other idea of conquering countries than by subduing the armies which defend them: have you done this, or can you do it? If you have not, it would be civil in you to let your proclamations alone for the present; otherwise, you will ruin more tories by your grace and favor, than you will whigs by your arms.

Were you to obtain possession of this city, you would not know what to do with it more than to plunder it. To hold it in the manner you hold New York, would be an additional dead weight upon your hands; and if a general conquest is your object, you had better be without the city than with it. When you have defeated all our armies, the cities will fall into your hands of themselves; but to creep into them in the manner you got into Princeton, Trenton, &c., is like robbing an orchard in the night before the fruit be ripe, and running away in the morning. Your experiment in the Jerseys is sufficient to teach you that you have something more to do than barely to get into other people's houses; and your new converts, to whom you promised all manner of protection, and seduced into new guilt by pardoning them from their former virtues, must begin to have a very contemptible opinion both of your power and your policy.

Your authority in the Jerseys is now reduced to the small circle which your army occupies, and your proclamation is no where else seen unless it be to be laughed at. The mighty subduers of the continent have retreated into a nut shell, and the proud forgivers of our sins are fled from those they came to pardon; and all this at a time when they were dispatching vessel after vessel to England with the great news of every day. In short, you have managed your Jersey expedition so very dexterously, that the dead only are conquerors, because none will dispute the ground with them.

In all the wars which you have formerly been concerned in, you had only armies to contend with; in this case you have both an army and a country to combat with. In former wars, the countries followed the fate of their capitals; Canada fell with Quebec, and Minorca with Port Mahon or St. Phillips; by subduing those, the conquerors opened a way into, and became masters of the country: here it is otherwise, if you get possession of a city here, you are obliged to shut yourselves up in it, and can make no other use of it, than to spend your country's money in. This is all the advantage you have drawn from New York; and you would draw less from Philadelphia, because it requires more force to keep it, and is much further from the sea. A pretty figure you and the tories would cut in this city, with a river full of ice, and a town full of fire; for the immediate consequence of your getting here would be, that you would be cannonaded out again, and the tories be obliged to make good the damage; and this, sooner or later, will be the fate of New York.

I wish to see the city saved, not so much from military as from natural motives. 'Tis the hiding place of women and children, and Lord Howe's proper business is with our armies. When I put all the circumstances together which ought to be taken, I laugh at your

notion of conquering America. Because you lived in a little country, where an army might run over the whole in a few days, and where a single company of soldiers might put a multitude to the rout, you expected to find it the same here. It is plain that you brought over with you all the narrow notions you were bred up with, and imagined that a proclamation in the king's name was to do great things; but Englishmen always travel for knowledge, and your lordship, I hope, will return, if you return at all, much wiser than you came.

We may be surprised by events we did not expect, and in that interval of recollection you may gain some temporary advantage. Such was the case a few weeks ago, but we soon ripen again into reason, collect our strength, and while you are preparing for a triumph, we come upon you with a defeat. Such it has been, and such it would be were you to try it a hundred times over. Were you to garrison the places you might march over, in order to secure their subjection, (for remember you can do it by no other means,) your army would be like a stream of water running to nothing. By the time you reached from New York to Virginia, you would be reduced to a string of drops not capable of hanging together; while we, by retreating from state to state, like a river turning back upon itself, would acquire strength in the same proportion as you lost it, and in the end be capable of overwhelming you. The country, in the mean time, would suffer, but it is a day of suffering, and we ought to expect it. What we contend for is worthy the affliction we may go through. If we get but bread to eat, and any kind of raiment to put on, we ought not only to be contented, but thankful. More than *that* we ought not to look for, and less than *that* heaven has not yet suffered us to want. He that would sell his birthright for a little *salt*, is as worthless as he who sold it for *porridge* without salt. And he that would part with it

for a gay coat, or a *plain* coat, ought for ever to be a slave in buff. What are salt, sugar and finery, to the inestimable blessings of "Liberty and safety!" Or what are the inconveniences of a few months to the tributary bondage of ages? The meanest peasant in America, blest with these sentiments, is a happy man compared with a New York tory; he can eat his morsel without repining, and when he has done, can sweeten it with a repast of wholesome air; he can take his child by the hand and bless it, without feeling the conscious shame of neglecting a parent's duty.

In making these remarks I have several objects in view.

On your part they are to expose the folly of your pretended authority as a commissioner; the wickedness of your cause in general; and the impossibility of your conquering us at any rate. On the part of the public, my intention is, to show them their true and solid interest: to encourage them to their own good, to remove the fears and falsities which bad men have spread, and weak men have encouraged; and to excite in all men a love for union, and a cheerfulness for duty. I shall submit one more case to you respecting your conquest of this country, and then proceed to new observations.

Suppose our armies in every part of this continent were immediately to disperse, every man to his home, or where else he might be safe, and engage to re-assemble again on a certain future day; it is clear that you would then have no army to contend with, yet you would be as much at a loss in that case as you are now; you would be afraid to send your troops in parties over the continent, either to disarm, or prevent us from assembling, lest they should not return; and while you kept them together, having no army of ours to dispute with, you could not call it a conquest; you might furnish out a pompous page in the *London Gazette* or a New York paper, but when we returned at the appointed time, you would have the same work to do that you had at first.

It has been the folly of Britain to suppose herself more powerful than she really is, and by that means has arrogated to herself a rank in the world she is not entitled to: for more than this century past she has not been able to carry on a war without foreign assistance. In Marlborough's campaigns, and from that day to this, the number of German troops and officers assisting her have been about equal with her own; ten thousand Hessians were sent to England last war to protect her from a French invasion; and she would have cut but a poor figure in her Canadian and West-Indian expeditions, had not America been lavish both of her money and men to help her along. The only instance in which she was engaged singly, that I can recollect, was against the rebellion in Scotland, in the years 1745 and 1746, and in that, out of three battles, she was twice beaten, till by thus reducing their numbers, (as we shall yours,) and taking a supply ship that was coming to Scotland with clothes, arms and money, (as we have often done,) she was at last enabled to defeat them. England was never famous by land; her officers have generally been suspected of cowardice, have more of the air of a dancing-master than a soldier, and by the samples which we have taken prisoners, we give the preference to ourselves. Her strength, of late, has lain in her extravagance; but as her finances and credit are now low, her sinews in that line begin to fail fast. As a nation she is the poorest in Europe; for were the whole kingdom, and all that is in it, to be put up for sale like the estate of a bankrupt, it would not fetch as much as she owes; yet this thoughtless wretch must go to war, and with the avowed design, too, of making us beasts of burden, to support her in riot and debauchery, and to assist her afterwards in distressing those nations who are now our best friends. This ingratitude may suit a tory, or the unchristian peevishness of a fallen Quaker, but none else.

'Tis the unhappy temper of the English to be pleased with any war, right or wrong, be it but successful; but they soon grow discontented with ill fortune, and it is an even chance that they are as clamorous for peace next summer, as the king and his ministers were for war last winter. In this natural view of things, your lordship stands in a very critical situation: your whole character is now staked upon your laurels; if they wither, you wither with them; if they flourish, you cannot live long to look at them; and at any rate, the black account hereafter is not far off. What lately appeared to us misfortunes, were only blessings in disguise; and the seeming advantages on your side have turned out to our profit. Even our loss of this city, as far as we can see, might be a principal gain to us: the more surface you spread over, the thinner you will be, and the easier wiped away; and our consolation under that apparent disaster would be, that the estates of the tories would become securities for the repairs. In short, there is no old ground we can fail upon, but some new foundation rises again to support us. "We have put, sir, our hands to the plough, and cursed be he that looketh back."

Your king, in his speech to parliament last spring, declared, "That he had no doubt but the great force they had enabled him to send to America, would effectually reduce the rebellious colonies." It has not, neither can it; but it has done just enough to lay the foundation of its own next year's ruin. You are sensible that you left England in a divided, distracted state of politics, and, by the command you had here, you became a principal prop in the court party; their fortunes rest on yours; by a single express you can fix their value with the public, and the degree to which their spirits shall rise or fall; they are in your hands as stock, and you have the secret of the *alley* with you. Thus situated and connected, you become the unintentional mechanical instrument of your own and their

overthrow. The king and his ministers put conquest out of doubt, and the credit of both depended on the proof. To support them in the interim, it was necessary that you should make the most of every thing, and we can tell by Hugh Gaine's New York paper what the complexion of the *London Gazette* is. With such a list of victories the nation cannot expect you will ask new supplies; and to confess your want of them, would give the lie to your triumphs, and impeach the king and his ministers of treasonable deception. If you make the necessary demand at home, your party sinks; if you make it not, you sink yourself; to ask it now is too late, and to ask it before was to soon, and unless it arrive quickly will be of no use. In short, the part you have to act, cannot be acted; and I am fully persuaded that all you have to trust to is, to do the best you can with what force you have got, or little more. Though we have greatly exceeded you in point of generalship and bravery of men, yet, as a people, we have not entered into the full soul of enterprise; for I, who know England and the disposition of the people well, am confident, that it is easier for us to effect a revolution there, than you a conquest here; a few thousand men landed in England with the declared design of deposing the present king, bringing his ministers to trial, and setting up the Duke of Gloucester in his stead, would assuredly carry their point, while you were grovelling here ignorant of the matter. As I send all my papers to England, this, like *Common Sense*, will find its way there; and though it may put one party on their guard, it will inform the other, and the nation in general, of our design to help them.

Thus far, sir, I have endeavored to give you a picture of present affairs: you may draw from it what conclusions you please. I wish as well to the true prosperity of England as you can, but I consider INDEPENDENCE *as*

America's natural right and interest, and never could see any real disservice it would be to Britain. If an English merchant receives an order, and is paid for it, it signifies nothing to him who governs the country. This is my creed of politics. If I have any where expressed myself over-warmly, 'tis from a fixed, immovable hatred I have, and ever had, to cruel men and cruel measures. I have likewise an aversion to monarchy, as being too debasing to the dignity of man; but I never troubled others with my notions till very lately, nor ever published a syllable in England in my life. What I write is pure nature, and my pen and my soul have ever gone together. My writings I have always given away, reserving only the expense of printing and paper, and sometimes not even that. I never courted either fame or interest, and my manner of life, to those who know it, will justify what I say. My study is to be useful, and if your lordship loves mankind as well as I do, you would, seeing you cannot conquer us, cast about and lend your hand towards accomplishing a peace. Our independence, with God's blessing, we will maintain against all the world; but as we wish to avoid evil ourselves, we wish not to inflict it on others. I am never over inquisitive into the secrets of the cabinet, but I have some notion, that if you neglect the present opportunity, that it will not be in our power to make a separate peace with you afterwards; for whatever treaties or alliances we form, we shall most faithfully abide by; wherefore you may be deceived if you think you can make it with us at any time. A lasting independent peace is my wish, end and aim; and to accomplish that, "*I pray God the* Americans *may never be defeated, and I trust while they have good officers, and are well commanded*," and willing to be commanded, "*that they* NEVER WILL."

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, Jan. 13, 1777.

THE CRISIS.

NUMBER III.

IN the progress of politics, as in the common occurrences of life, we are not only apt to forget the ground we have travelled over, but frequently neglect to gather up experience as we go. We expend, if I may so say, the knowledge of every day on the circumstances that produce it, and journey on in search of new matter and new refinements: but as it is pleasant and sometimes useful to look back, even to the first periods of infancy, and trace the turns and windings through which we have passed, so we may likewise derive many advantages by halting a while in our political career, and taking a review of the wondrous complicated labyrinth of little more than yesterday.

Truly may we say, that never did men grow old in so short a time! We have crowded the business of an age into the compass of a few months, and have been driven through such a rapid succession of things, that for the want of leisure to think, we unavoidably wasted knowledge as we came, and have left nearly as much behind us as we brought with us: but the road is yet rich with the fragments, and before we fully lose sight of them, will repay us for the trouble of stopping to pick them up.

Were a man to be totally deprived of memory, he would be incapable of forming any just opinion; every thing about him would seem a chaos; he would have even his own history to ask from every one; and by not knowing how the world went in his absence, he would be at a loss to know how it *ought* to go on when he

recovered, or rather, returned to it again. In like manner, though in a less degree, a too great inattention to past occurrences retards and bewilders our judgment in every thing; while, on the contrary, by comparing what is past with what is present, we frequently hit on the true character of both, and become wise with very little trouble. It is a kind of counter-march, by which we get into the rear of time, and mark the movements and meaning of things as we make our return. There are certain circumstances, which, at the time of their happening, are a kind of riddles and as every riddle is to be followed by its answer, so those kind of circumstances will be followed by their events, and those events are always the true solution. A considerable space of time may lapse between, and unless we continue our observations from the one to the other, the harmony of them will pass away unnoticed; but the misfortune is, that partly from the pressing necessity of some instant things, and partly from the impatience of our own tempers, we are frequently in such a hurry to make out the meaning of every thing as fast as it happens, that we thereby never truly understand it; and not only start new difficulties to ourselves by so doing, but, as it were, embarrass Providence in her good designs.

I have been civil in stating this fault on a large scale, for, as it now stands, it does not appear to be levelled against any particular set of men; but were it to be refined a little further, it might afterwards be applied to the tories with a degree of striking propriety: those men have been remarkable for drawing sudden conclusions from single facts. The least apparent mishap on our side, or the least seeming advantage on the part of the enemy, have determined with them the fate of a whole campaign. By this hasty judgment they have converted a retreat into a defeat; mistook generalship for error; while every little advantage purposely given the enemy,

either to weaken their strength by dividing it, embarrass their councils by multiplying their objects, or to secure a greater post by the surrender of a less, has been instantly magnified into a conquest. Thus, by quartering ill policy upon ill principles, they have frequently promoted the cause they designed to injure, and injured that which they intended to promote. It is probable the campaign may open before this number comes from the press. The enemy have long lain idle, and amused themselves with carrying on the war by proclamations only. While they continue their delay our strength increases, and were they to move to action now, it is a circumstantial proof that they have no reinforcement coming; wherefore, in either case, the comparative advantage will be ours. Like a wounded, disabled whale, they want only time and room to die in; and though in the agony of their exit, it may be unsafe to live within the flapping of their tail, yet every hour shortens their date, and lessens their power of mischief. If any thing happens while this number is in press, it will afford me a subject for the last pages of it. At present I am tired of waiting; and as neither the enemy, nor the state of politics have *yet* produced any thing new, I am thereby left in the field of general matter, undirected by any striking or particular object. This *Crisis*, therefore, will be made up rather of variety than novelty, and consist more of things useful than things wonderful.

The success of the cause, the union of the people, and the means of supporting and securing both, are points which cannot be too much attended to. He who doubts of the former is a desponding coward, and he who willfully disturbs the latter is a traitor. Their characters are easily fixed, and under these short descriptions I leave them for the present.

One of the greatest degrees of sentimental union which America ever knew, was in denying the right of the

British parliament "*to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever.*" The declaration is, in its form, an almighty one, and is the loftiest stretch of arbitrary power that ever one set of men, or one country claimed over another. Taxation was nothing more than the putting the declared right into practice; and this failing, recourse was had to arms, as a means to establish both the right *and* the practice, or to answer a worse purpose, which will be mentioned in the course of this number. And in order to repay themselves the expense of an army, and to profit by their own injustice, the colonies were, by another law, declared to be in a state of actual rebellion, and of consequence all property therein would fall to the conquerors.

The colonies, on their part, *first*, denied the right; *secondly*, they suspended the use of taxable articles, and petitioned against the practice of taxation: and these failing, they, *thirdly*, defended their property by force, as soon as it was forcibly invaded, and in answer to the declaration of rebellion and non-protection, published their declaration of independence and right of self-protection.

These, in a few words, are different stages of the quarrel; and the parts are so intimately and necessarily connected with each other as to admit of no separation. A person, to use a trite phrase, must be a whig or a tory in the lump. His feelings, as a man, may be wounded; his charity, as a Christian, may be moved; but his political principles must go through all the cases on one side or the other. He cannot be a whig in *this* stage, and a tory in *that.* If he says he is against the united independence of the continent, he is to all intents and purposes against her in all the rest; because *this last* comprehends the whole. And he may just as well say, that Britain was right in declaring us rebels; right in taxing us; and right in declaring her "*right to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever.*" It signifies nothing

what neutral ground, of his own creating, he may skulk upon for shelter, for the quarrel in no stage of it hath afforded any such ground; and either we or Britain are absolutely right or absolutely wrong through the whole.

Britain, like a gamester nearly ruined, hath now put all her losses into one bet, and is playing a desperate game for the total. If she wins it, she wins from *me* my life; she wins the continent as the forfeited property of rebels; the right of taxing those that are left as reduced subjects; and the power of binding them slaves: and the single die which determines this unparalleled event is, whether we support our independence or she overturn it. This is coming to the point at once. Here is the touchstone to try men by. *He that is not a supporter of the independent states of America, in the same degree that his religious and political principles would suffer him to support the government of any other country, of which he called himself a subject, is, in the American sense of the word,* A TORY; *and the instant that he endeavors to bring his toryism into practice, he becomes* A TRAITOR. The first can only be detected by a general test, and the law hath already provided for the latter.

It is unnatural and impolitic to admit men who would root up our independence to have any share in our legislation, either as electors or representatives; because the support of our independence rests, in a great measure, on the vigor and purity of our public bodies. Would Britain, even in time of peace, much less in war, suffer an election to be carried by men who professed themselves to be not her subjects, or allow such to sit in parliament? Certainly not.

But there are a certain species of tories with whom conscience or principle hath nothing to do, and who are so from avarice only. Some of the first fortunes on the continent, on the part of the whigs, are staked on the issue of our present measures. And shall disaffection

only be rewarded with security? Can any thing be a greater inducement to a miserly man, than the hope of making his mammon safe? And though the scheme be fraught with every character of folly, yet, so long as he supposes, that by doing nothing materially criminal against America on one part, and by expressing his private disapprobation against independence, as palliative with the enemy on the other part, he stands thereby in a safe line between both; while, I say, this ground be suffered to remain, craft, and the spirit of avarice, will point it out, and men will not be wanting to fill up this most contemptible of all characters.

These men, ashamed to own the sordid cause from whence their disaffection springs, add thereby meanness to meanness, by endeavoring to shelter themselves under the mask of hypocrisy; that is, they had rather be thought to be tories from *some kind of principle*, than tories by having *no principle at all*. But till such time as they can show some real reason, natural, political, or conscientious, on which their objections to independence are founded, we are not obliged to give them credit for being tories of the first stamp, but must set them down as tories of the last.

In the second number of the *Crisis*, I endeavored to show the impossibility of the enemy's making any conquest of America, that nothing was wanting on our part but patience and perserverance, and that, with these virtues, our success, as far as human speculation could discern, seemed as certain as fate. But as there are many among us, who, influenced by others, have regularly gone back from the principles they once held, in proportion as we have gone forward; and as it is the unfortunate lot of many a good man to live within the neighborhood of disaffected ones; I shall, therefore, for the sake of confirming the one and recovering the other, endeavor, in the space of a page or two, to go over some of

the leading principles in support of independence. It is a much pleasanter task to prevent vice than to punish it, and, however our tempers may be gratified by resentment, or our national expenses eased by forfeited estates, harmony and friendship is, nevertheless, the happiest condition a country can be blest with.

The principal arguments in support of independence may be comprehended under the four following heads.

First, The natural right to the continent to independence.

Second, Her interest in being independent.

Third, The necessity,—and

Fourth, The moral advantages arising therefrom.

First. The natural right of the continent to independence, is a point which never yet was called in question. It will not even admit of a debate. To deny such a right, would be a kind of atheism against nature: and the best answer to such an objection would be, "*The fool hath said in his heart there is no God.*"

Second. The interest of the continent in being independent is a point as clearly right as the former. America, by her own internal industry, and unknown to all the powers of Europe, was, at the beginning of the dispute, arrived at a pitch of greatness, trade and population, beyond which it was the interest of Britain not to suffer her to pass, lest she should grow too powerful to be kept subordinate. She began to view this country with the same uneasy malicious eye, with which a covetous guardian would view his ward, whose estate he had been enriching himself by for twenty years, and saw him just arriving at manhood. And America owes no more to Britain for her present maturity, than the ward would to his guardian for being twenty-one years of age. That America hath flourished *at the time* she was under the government of Britain, is true; but there is every natural reason to believe, that had she been an independent

country from the first settlement thereof, uncontrolled by any foreign power, free to make her own laws, regulate and encourage her own commerce, she had by this time been of much greater worth than now. The case is simply this: the first settlers in the different colonies were left to shift for themselves, unnoticed and unsupported by any European government: but as the tyranny and persecution of the old world daily drove numbers to the new, and as, by the favor of heaven on their industry and perseverance, they grew into importance, so, in a like degree, they became an object of profit to the greedy eyes of Europe. It was impossible, in this state of infancy, however thriving and promising, that they could resist the power of any armed invader that should seek to bring them under his authority. In this situation, Britain thought it worth her while to claim them, and the continent received and acknowledged the claimer. It was, in reality, of no very great importance who was her master, seeing, that from the force and ambition of the different powers of Europe, she must, till she acquired strength enough to assert her own right, acknowledge some one. As well, perhaps, Britain as another; and it might have been as well to have been under the states of Holland as any. The same hopes of engrossing and profiting by her trade, by not oppressing it too much, would have operated alike with any master, and produced to the colonies the same effects. The clamor of protection, likewise, was all a farce; because, in order to make *that* protection necessary, she must first, by her own quarrels, create us enemies. Hard times, indeed!

To know whether it be the interest of the continent to be independent, we need only ask this easy, simple question: Is it the interest of a man to be a boy all his life? The answer to one will be the answer to both. America hath been one continued scene of legislative contention from the first king's representative to the last;

and this was unavoidably founded in the natural opposition of interest between the old country and the new. A governor sent from England, or receiving his authority therefrom, ought never to have been considered in any other light than that of a genteel commissioned spy, whose private business was information, and his public business a kind of civilized oppression. In the first of these characters he was to watch the tempers, sentiments and disposition of the people, the growth of trade, and the increase of private fortunes; and, in the latter, to suppress all such acts of the assemblies, however beneficial to the people, which did not directly or indirectly throw some increase of power or profit into the hands of those that sent him.

America, till now, could never be called a *free country*, because her legislation depended on the will of a man three thousand miles distant, whose interest was in opposition to ours, and who, by a single "no," could forbid what law he pleased.

The freedom of trade, likewise, is, to a trading country, an article of such importance, that the principal source of wealth depends upon it; and it is impossible that any country can flourish, as it otherwise might do, whose commerce is engrossed, cramped and fettered by the laws and mandates of another—yet these evils, and more than I can here enumerate, the continent has suffered by being under the government of England. By an independence we clear the whole at once—put an end to the business of unanswered petitions and fruitless remonstrances—exchange Britain for Europe—shake hands with the world—live at peace with the world—and trade to any market where we can buy and sell.

Third. The necessity, likewise, of being independent, even before it was declared, became so evident and important, that the continent ran the risk of being ruined every day that she delayed it. There was reason to

believe that Britain would endeavor to make a European matter of it, and, rather than lose the whole, would dismember it, like Poland, and dispose of her several claims to the highest bidder. Genoa, failing in her attempts to reduce Corsica, made a sale of it to the French, and such traffics have been common in the old world. We had at that time no ambassador in any part of Europe, to counteract her negotiations, and by that means she had the range of every foreign court uncontradicted on our part. We even knew nothing of the treaty for the Hessians till it was concluded, and the troops ready to embark. Had we been independent before, we had probably prevented her obtaining them. We had no credit abroad, because of our rebellious dependancy. Our ships could claim no protection in foreign ports, because we afforded them no justifiable reason for granting it to us. The calling ourselves subjects, and at the same time fighting against the power which we acknowledged, was a dangerous precedent to all Europe. If the grievances justified the taking up arms, they justified our separation; if they did not justify our separation, neither could they justify our taking up arms. All Europe was interested in reducing us as rebels, and all Europe (or the greatest part at least) is interested in supporting us as independent states. At home our condition was still worse; our currency had no foundation, and the fall of it would have ruined whig and tory alike. We had no other law than a kind of moderated passion; no other civil power than an honest mob; and no other protection than the temporary attachment of one man to another. Had independence been delayed a few months longer, this continent would have been plunged into irrecoverable confusion: some violent for it, some against it, till, in the general cabal, the rich would have been ruined, and the poor destroyed. It is to independence that every tory owes the present safety which he lives in; for

by *that*, and *that only*, we emerged from a state of dangerous suspense, and became a regular people.

The necessity, likewise, of being independent, had there been no rupture between Britain and America, would, in a little time, have brought one on. The increasing importance of commerce, the weight and perplexity of legislation, and the entangled state of European politics, would daily have shown to the continent the impossibility of continuing subordinate; for, after the coolest reflections on the matter, *this must* be allowed, that Britain was too jealous of America to govern it justly; too ignorant of it to govern it well; and too far distant from it to govern it at all.

Fourth. But what weigh most with all men of serious reflection are, the *moral advantages* arising from independence: war and desolation have become the trade of the old world; and America neither could, nor can be under the government of Britain without becoming a sharer of her guilt, and a partner in all the dismal commerce of death. The spirit of duelling, extended on a national scale, is a proper character for European wars. They have seldom any other motive than pride, or any other object than fame. The conquerors and the conquered are generally ruined alike, and the chief difference at last is, that the one marches home with his honors, and the other without them. 'Tis the natural temper of the English to fight for a feather, if they suppose *that feather* to be an affront; and America, without the right of asking why, must have abetted in every quarrel, and abided by its fate. It is a shocking situation to live in, that one country must be brought into all the wars of another, whether the measure be right or wrong, or whether she will or not; yet this, in the fullest extent, was, and ever would be, the unavoidable consequence of the connection. Surely the Quakers forgot their own principles, when, in their late Testimony, they called

this connection, with these military and miserable appendages hanging to it—"*the happy constitution.*"

Britain, for centuries past, had been nearly fifty years out of every hundred at war with some power or other. It certainly ought to be a conscientious as well as political consideration with America, not to dip her hands in the bloody work of Europe. Our situation affords us a retreat from their cabals, and the present happy union of the states bids fair for extirpating the future use of arms from one quarter of the world; yet such have been the irreligious politics of the present leaders of the Quakers, that, for the sake of they scarce know what, they would cut off every hope of such a blessing by tying this continent to Britain, like Hector to the chariot wheel of Achilles, to be dragged through all the miseries of endless European wars.

The connection, viewed from this ground, is distressing to every man who has the feelings of humanity. By having Britain for our master, we became enemies to the greatest part of Europe, and they to us: and the consequence was war inevitable. By being our own masters, independent of any foreign one, we have Europe for our friends, and the prospect of an endless peace among ourselves. Those who were advocates for the British government over these colonies, were obliged to limit both their arguments, and their ideas to the period of an European peace only: the moment Britain became plunged in war, every supposed convenience to us vanished, and all we could hope for was *not to be ruined.* Could this be a desirable condition for a young country to be in?

Had the French pursued their fortune immediately after the defeat of Braddock's last war, this city and province had then experienced the woeful calamities of being a British subject. A scene of the same kind might happen again; for America, considered as a subject to

the crown of Britain, would ever have been the seat of war and the bone of contention between the two powers.

On the whole, if the future expulsion of arms from one quarter of the world would be a desirable object to a peaceable man;—if the freedom of trade to every part of it can engage the attention of a man of business;—if the support or fall of millions of currency can affect our interests;—if the entire possession of estates, by cutting off the lordly claims of Britain over the soil, deserves the regard of landed property;—and if the right of making our own laws, uncontrolled by the royal or ministerial spies or mandates, be worthy our care as freemen;—then are all men interested in the support of independence; and may he that supports it not, be driven from the blessing, to live unpitied beneath the servile sufferings of scandalous subjection!

We have been amused with the tales of ancient wonders; we have read and wept over the histories of other nations; applauded, censured, or pitied, as their cases affected us. —The fortitude and patience of the sufferers—the justness of their cause—the weight of their oppressions and oppressors—the object to be saved or lost—with all the consequences of a defeat or a conquest—have, in the hour of sympathy, bewitched our hearts, and chained it to their fate: but where is the power that ever made war upon petitioners? Or where is the war on which a world was staked till now?

We may not, perhaps, be wise enough to make all the advantages we ought of our independence; but they are, nevertheless, marked and presented to us with every character of *great* and *good*, and worthy the hand of him who sent them. I look through the present trouble to a time of tranquillity, when we shall have it in our power to set an example of peace to all the world. Were the Quakers really impressed and influenced by the quiet principles they profess to hold, they would, however

they might disapprove the means, be the first of all men to approve of *independence*, because, by separating ourselves from the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, it affords an opportunity never given to man before, of carrying their favorite principle of peace into general practice, by establishing governments that shall hereafter exist without wars. O! ye fallen, cringing, priest and Pemberton-ridden people! What more can we say of ye than that a religious Quaker is a valuable character, and a political Quaker a real Jesuit?

Having thus gone over some of the principal points in support of independence, I must now request the reader to return back with me to the period when it first began to be a public doctrine, and to examine the progress it has made among the various classes of men. The era I mean to begin at, is the breaking out of hostilities, April 19th, 1775. Until this event happened, the continent seemed to view the dispute as a kind of law-suit for a matter of right, litigating between the old country and the new; and she felt the same kind and degree of horror, as if she had seen an oppressive plaintiff, at the head of a band of ruffians, enter the court, while the cause was before it, and put the judge, the jury, the defendant and his counsel, to the sword. Perhaps a more heart-felt convulsion never reached a country with the same degree of power and rapidity before, and never may again. Pity for the sufferers, mixed with indignation at the violence, and heightened with apprehensions of undergoing the same fate made the affair of Lexington the affair of the continent. Every part of it felt the shock, and all vibrated together. A general promotion of sentiment took place: those who had drank deeply into whiggish principles, that is, the right and necessity not only of opposing, but wholly setting aside the power of the crown as soon as it became practically dangerous (for in theory it was always so) stepped into the first stage

of independence; while another class of whigs, equally sound in principle, but not so sanguine in enterprise, attached themselves the stronger to the cause, and fell close in with the rear of the former; their partition was a mere point. Numbers of the moderate men, whose chief fault, *at that time*, arose from their entertaining a better opinion of Britain than she deserved, convinced now of their mistake, gave her up, and publicly declared themselves good whigs. While the tories, seeing it was no longer a laughing matter, either sunk into silent obscurity, or contented themselves with coming forth and abusing General Gage: not a single advocate appeared to justify the action of that day; it seemed to appear to every one with the same magnitude, struck every one with the same force, and created in every one the same abhorrence. From this period we may date the growth of independence.

If the many circumstances which happened at this memorable time, be taken in one view, and compared with each other, they will justify a conclusion which seems not to have been attended to, I mean a fixed design in the king and ministry of driving America into arms, in order that they might be furnished with a pretence for seizing the whole continent, as the immediate property of the crown. A noble plunder for hungry courtiers!

It ought to be remembered, that the first petition from the congress was at this time unanswered on the part of the British king. That the motion, called Lord North's motion, of the 20th of February, 1775, arrived in America the latter end of March. This motion was to be laid by several governors, then in being, before the assembly of each province; and the first assembly before which it was laid, was the assembly of Pennsylvania, in *May* following. This being a just state of the case, I then ask, why were hostilities commenced between the time

of passing the resolve in the House of Commons, of the 20th of February, and the time of the assemblies meeting to deliberate upon it? Degrading and infamous as that motion was, there is, nevertheless, reason to believe that the king and his adherents were afraid the colonies would agree to it, and lest they should, took effectual care they should not, by provoking them with hostilities in the interim. They had not the least doubt at that time of conquering America at one blow; and what they expected to get by a conquest being infinitely greater than any thing they could hope to get either by taxation or accommodation, they seemed determined to prevent even the possibility of hearing each other, lest America should disappoint their greedy hopes of the whole, by listening even to their own terms. On the one hand they refused to hear the petition of the continent, and on the other hand took effectual care the continent should not hear them.

That the motion of the 20th of February and the orders for commencing hostilities were both concerted by the same person or persons, and not the latter by General Gage, as was falsely imagined at first, is evident from an extract of a letter of his to the administration, read among other papers in the House of Commons, in which he informs his masters, "*That though their idea of his disarming certain counties was a right one, yet it required him to be master of the country, in order to enable him to execute it.*" This was prior to the commencement of hostilities, and consequently before the motion of the 20th of February could be deliberated on by the several assemblies.

Perhaps it may be asked, why was the motion passed, if there was at the same time a plan to aggravate Americans not to listen to it? Lord North assigned one reason himself, which, was *a hope of dividing them.* This was publicly tempting them to reject it; that if, in case the

injury of arms should fail in provoking them sufficiently, the insult of such a declaration might fill it up. But by passing the motion and getting it afterwards rejected in America, it enabled them, in their wretched idea of politics, among other things, to hold up the colonies to foreign powers, with every possible mark of disobedience and rebellion. They had applied to those powers not to supply the continent with arms, ammunition, &c., and it was necessary they should incense them against us, by assigning on their own part some seeming reputable reason why. By dividing, it had a tendency to weaken the states, and likewise to perplex the adherents of America in England. But the principal scheme, and that which has marked their character in every part of their conduct, was a design of precipitating the colonies into a state which they might afterwards deem rebellion, and, under that pretence, put an end to all future complaints, petitions and remonstrances, by seizing the whole at once. They had ravaged one part of the globe, till it could glut them no longer; their prodigality required new plunder, and through the East India article *tea* they hoped to transfer their rapine from that quarter of the world to this. Every designed quarrel had its pretence: and the same barbarian avarice accompanied the *plant* to America, which ruined the country that produced it.

That men never turn rogues without turning fools is a maxim, sooner or later, universally true. The commencement of hostilities, being in the beginning of April, was, of all times the worst chosen; the congress were to meet the tenth of May following, and the distress the continent felt at this unparalleled outrage gave a stability to *that body*, which no other circumstance could have done. It suppressed, too, all inferior debates, and bound them together by a necessitous affection, without giving them time to differ upon trifles. The suffering, likewise, softened the whole body of the people into a

degree of pliability, which laid the principal foundation-stone of union, order and government; and which, at any other time, might only have fretted and then faded away unnoticed and unimproved: but Providence, who best knows how to time her misfortunes as well as her immediate favors, chose this to be the time: And who dare dispute it?

It did not seem the disposition of the people, at this crisis, to heap petition upon petition, while the former remained unanswered: the measure, however, was carried in Congress, and a second petition was sent; of which I shall only remark that it was submissive even to a dangerous fault, because the prayer of it appealed solely to, what it called the prerogative of the crown, while the matter in dispute was confessed to be constitutional. But even this petition, flattering as it was, was still not so harmonious as the chink of cash, and consequently not sufficiently grateful to the tyrant and his ministry. From every circumstance it is evident, that it was the determination of the British court to have nothing to do with America but to conquer it fully and absolutely. They were certain of success, and the field of battle was to be the only place of treaty. I am confident there are thousands and tens of thousands in America who wonder *now* that they should ever have thought otherwise; but the sin of that day was the sin of civility, yet it operated against our present good in the same manner that a civil opinion of the devil would against our future peace.

Independence was a doctrine scarce and rare, even towards the conclusion of the year 1775; all our politics had been founded on the hope or expectation of making the matter up—a hope, which, though general on the side of America, had never entered the head or heart of the British court. Their hope was conquest and confiscation. Good heavens! what volumes of thanks does America owe to Britain? What infinite obligation to the tool

that fills, with paradoxical vacancy, the throne! Nothing but the sharpest essence of villainy, compounded with the strongest distillation of folly, could have produced a menstruum that would have effected a separation. The Congress in 1774, administered an abortive medicine to independence, by prohibiting the importation of goods, and the succeeding congress rendered the dose still more dangerous by continuing it. Had independence been a settled system with America, (as Britain has advanced,) she ought to have *doubled* her importation, and prohibited in some degree her exportation. And this single circumstance is sufficient to acquit America before any jury of nations, of having a continental plan of independence in view: a charge which, had it been true, would have been honorable, but is so grossly false, that either the amazing ignorance, or the wilful dishonesty of the British court, is effectually proved by it.

The second petition, like the first, produced no answer; it was scarcely acknowledged to have been received; the British court were too determined in their villainy even to act it artfully, and in their rage for conquest neglected the necessary subtleties for obtaining it. They might have divided, distracted and played a thousand tricks with us, had they been as cunning as they were cruel.

This last indignity gave a new spring to independence. Those who knew the savage obstinacy of the king, and the jobbing, gambling spirit of the court, predicted the fate of the petition, as soon as it was sent from America; for the men being known, their measures were easily foreseen. As politicians we ought not so much to ground our hopes on the reasonableness of the thing we ask, as on the reasonableness of the person of whom we ask it: Who would expect discretion from a fool, candor from a tyrant, or justice from a villain?

As every prospect of accommodation seemed now to

fail fast, men began to think seriously on the matter; and their reason being thus stripped of the false hope which had long encompassed it, became approachable by fair debate. Yet still the bulk of the people hesitated. They startled at the novelty of independence, without once considering that our getting into arms at first was a more extraordinary novelty, and that all other nations had gone through the work of independence before us. They doubted likewise the ability of the continent to support it, without reflecting that it required the same force to obtain an accommodation by arms as an independence. If the one was acquirable, the other was the same; because, to accomplish either, it was necessary that our strength should be too great for Britain to subdue; and it was too unreasonable to suppose, that with the power of being masters, we should submit to be servants.* Their caution at this time was exceedingly misplaced: for if they were able to defend their property and maintain their rights by arms, they, consequently, were able to defend and support their independence; and in proportion as these men saw the necessity and correctness of the measure, they honestly and openly declared and adopted it, and the part they have acted since, has done them honor and fully established their characters. Error in opinion has this peculiar advantage with it, that the foremost point of the contrary ground

* In this state of political suspense the pamphlet *Common Sense* made its appearance, and the success it met with does not become me to mention. Dr. Franklin, Mr. Samuel and John Adams, were severally spoken of as the supposed author. I had not, at that time, the pleasure either of personally knowing or being known to the last two gentlemen. The favor of Dr. Franklin's friendship I possessed in England, and my introduction to this part of the world was through his patronage. I happened, when a school-boy, to pick up a pleasing natural history of Virginia, and my inclination from that day of seeing the western side of the Atlantic never left me. In October, 1775, Dr. Franklin proposed giving me such materials as were in his hands, towards completing a history of the present transactions, and seemed desirous of having the first volume out the next spring. I had then formed the outlines of *Common Sense*, and finished nearly the first part; and as I supposed the doctor's design in getting out a history, was to open the new year with a new system, I expected to surprise him with a production on that subject, much earlier than he had thought of; and without informing him what I was doing, got it ready for the press as fast as I conveniently could, and sent him the first pamphlet that was printed off.

may at any time be reached by the sudden exertion of a thought; and it frequently happens in sentimental differences, that some striking circumstance, or some forcible reason quickly conceived, will effect in an instant what neither argument nor example could produce in an age.

I find it impossible in the small compass I am limited to, to trace out the progress which independence has made on the minds of the different classes of men, and the several reasons by which they were moved. With some, it was a passionate abhorrence against the king of England and his ministry, as a set of savages and brutes; and these men, governed by the agony of a wounded mind, were for trusting every thing to hope and heaven, and bidding defiance at once. With others, it was a growing conviction that the scheme of the British court was to create, ferment and drive on a quarrel, for the sake of confiscated plunder: and men of this cast ripened into independence in proportion as the evidence increased. While a third class conceived it was the true interest of America, internally and externally, to be her own master, and gave their support to independence, step by step, as they saw her abilities to maintain it enlarge. With many, it was a compound of all these reasons; while those who were too callous to be reached by either, remained, and still remain tories.

The *legal necessity* of being independent, with several collateral reasons, is pointed out in an elegant masterly manner, in a charge to the grand jury for the district of Charleston, by the Hon. William Henry Drayton, chief justice of South Carolina. This performance, and the address of the convention of New York, are pieces, in my humble opinion, of the first rank in America.

The principal causes why independence has not been so universally supported as it ought, are *fear* and *indolence*, and the causes why it has been opposed, are *avarice*, *down-right villainy*, and *lust of personal power*. There

is not such a being in America as a tory from conscience; some secret defect or other is interwoven in the character of all those, be they men or women, who can look with patience on the brutality, luxury and debauchery of the British court, and the violations of their army here. A woman's virtue must sit very lightly on her who can even hint a favorable sentiment in their behalf. It is remarkable that the whole race of prostitutes in New York were tories; and the schemes for supporting the tory cause in this city, for which several are now in jail, and one hanged, were concerted and carried on in common bawdy-houses, assisted by those who kept them.

The connection between vice and meanness is a fit subject for satire, but when the satire is a fact, it cuts with the irresistible power of a diamond. If a Quaker, in defence of his just rights, his property, and the chastity of his house, takes up a musket, he is expelled the meeting; but the present king of England, who seduced and took into keeping a sister of their society, is reverenced and supported by repeated Testimonies, while the friendly noodle from whom she was taken (and who is now in this city) continues a drudge in the service of his rival, as if proud of being cuckolded by a creature called a king.

Our support and success depend on such a variety of men and circumstances, that every one, who does but wish well, is of some use. There are men who have a strange aversion to arms, yet have hearts to risk every shilling in the cause, or in support of those who have better talents for defending it. Nature, in the arrangement of mankind, has fitted some for every service in life. Were all soldiers, all would starve and go naked, and were none soldiers, all would be slaves. As *disaffection* to independence is the badge of a tory, so *affection* to it is the mark of a whig: and the different services of the whigs, down from those who nobly contribute every

thing, to those who have nothing to render but their wishes, tend all to the same centre, though with different degrees of merit and ability. The larger we make the circle, the more we shall harmonize, and the stronger we shall be. All we want to shut out is disaffection, and *that excluded*, we must accept from each other such duties as we are best fitted to bestow. A narrow system of politics, like a narrow system of religion, is calculated only to sour the temper, and be at variance with mankind.

All we want to know in America is simply this: who is for independence, and who is not? Those who are for it, will support it, and the remainder will undoubtedly see the reasonableness of paying the charges; while those who oppose or seek to betray it, must expect the more rigid fate of the jail and the gibbet. There is a bastard kind of generosity, which being extended to all men, is as fatal to society, on one hand, as the want of true generosity is on the other. A lax manner of administering justice, falsely termed moderation, has a tendency both to dispirit public virtue, and promote the growth of public evils. Had the late committee of safety taken cognizance of the last Testimony of the Quakers and proceeded against such delinquents as were concerned therein, they had, probably, prevented the treasonable plans which have been concerted since. When one villain is suffered to escape, it encourages another to proceed, either from a hope of escaping likewise, or an apprehension that we dare not punish. It has been a matter of general surprise, that no notice was taken of the incendiary publication of the Quakers, of the 20th of November last: a publication evidently intended to promote sedition and treason, and encourage the enemy, who were then within a day's march of this city, to proceed on and possess it. I here present the reader with a memorial which was laid before the board of safety a few days after the Testimony appeared. Not a member of

that board, that I conversed with, but expressed the highest detestation of the perverted principles and conduct of the Quaker junto, and a wish that the board would take the matter up; notwithstanding which, it was suffered to pass away unnoticed, to the encouragement of new acts of treason, the general danger of the cause, and the disgrace of the state.

To the honorable the Council of Safety of the State of Pennsylvania:

At a meeting of a reputable number of the inhabitants of the city of Philadelphia, impressed with a proper sense of the justice of the cause which this continent is engaged in, and animated with a generous fervor for supporting the same, it was resolved, that the following be laid before the board of safety:

"We profess liberality of sentiment to all men, with this distinction *only*, that those who do not deserve it would become wise and *seek* to deserve it. We hold the pure doctrines of universal liberty of conscience, and conceive it our duty to endeavor to secure that sacred right to others, as well as to defend it for ourselves; for we undertake not to judge of the religious rectitude of tenets, but leave the whole matter to Him who made us.

"We persecute no man, neither will we abet in the persecution of any man for religion's sake; our common relation to others being that of fellow-citizens and fellow subjects of one single community; and in this line of connection we hold out the right hand of fellowship to all men. But we should conceive ourselves to be unworthy members of the *free and independent states of America*, were we unconcernedly to see or to suffer any treasonable wound, public or private, directly or indirectly, to be given against the peace and safety of the same. We inquire not into the rank of the offenders, nor into their religious persuasion; we have no business

with either, our part being only to find them out and exhibit them to justice.

"A printed paper, dated the 20th of November, and signed '*John Pemberton*,' whom we suppose to be an inhabitant of this city, has lately been dispersed abroad, a copy of which accompanies this. Had the framers and publishers of that paper conceived it their duty to exhort the youth and others of their society, to a patient submission under the present trying visitations, and humbly to wait the event of heaven towards them, they had therein shown a Christian temper, and we had been silent; but the anger and political virulence with which their instructions are given, and the abuse with which they stigmatize all ranks of men, not thinking like themselves, leave no doubt on our minds from what spirit their publication proceeded: and it is disgraceful to the pure cause of truth, that men can dally with words of the most sacred import, and play them off as mechanically as if religion consisted only in contrivance. We know of no instance in which the Quakers have been compelled to bear arms, or to do any thing which might strain their conscience; wherefore their advice, 'to withstand and refuse to submit to the arbitrary instructions and ordinances of men,' appear to us a false alarm, and could only be treasonably calculated to gain favor with our enemies, when they are seemingly on the brink of invading this state, or, what is still worse, to weaken the hands of our defence, that their entrance into this city might be made practicable and easy.

"We disclaim all tumult and disorder in the punishment of offenders; and wish to be governed, not by temper but by reason, in the manner of treating them. We are sensible that our cause has suffered by the two following errors; *first*, by ill-judged lenity to traitorous persons in some cases; and, *secondly*, by only a passionate treatment of them in others. For the future we disown

both, and wish to be steady in our proceedings, and serious in our punishments.

"Every state in America has, by the repeated voice of its inhabitants, directed and authorized the continental congress to publish a formal declaration of independence of, and separation from, the oppressive king and parliament of Great Britain; and we look on every man as an enemy, who does not in some line or other, give his assistance towards supporting the same; at the same time we consider the offence to be heightened to a degree of unpardonable guilt, when such persons, under the show of religion, endeavor, either by writing, speaking, or otherwise, to subvert, overturn, or bring reproach upon the independence of this continent as declared by congress.

"The publishers of the paper signed '*John Pemberton*,' have called in a loud manner to their friends and connections, 'to withstand or refuse' obedience to whatever 'instructions or ordinances' may be published, not warranted by (what they call) 'that happy constitution under which they and others long enjoyed tranquillity and peace.' If this be not treason, we know not what may properly be called by that name.

"To us it is a matter of surprise and astonishment, that men with the word '*peace, peace*,' continually on their lips, should be so fond of living under and supporting a government, and at the same time calling it '*happy*,' which is never better pleased than when at war—that hath filled India with carnage and famine, Africa with slavery, and tampered with Indians and Negroes to cut the throats of the freemen of America. We conceive it a disgrace to this state, to harbor or wink at such palpable hypocrisy. But as we seek not to hurt the hair of any man's head, when we can make ourselves safe without, we wish such persons to restore peace to themselves and us, by removing themselves to some part of the king of Great Britain's dominions, as by that means they may

live unmolested by us and we by them; for our fixed opinion is, that those who do not deserve a place among us, ought not to have one.

"We conclude with requesting the council of safety to take into consideration the paper signed '*John Pemberton*,' and if it shall appear to them to be of a dangerous tendency, or of a treasonable nature, that they would commit the signer, together with such other persons as they can discover were concerned therein, into custody, until such time as some mode of trial shall ascertain the full degree of their guilt and punishment: in the doing of which, we wish their judges, whoever they may be, to disregard the man, his connections, interest, riches, poverty, or principles of religion, and to attend to the nature of his offence only."

The most cavilling sectarian cannot accuse the foregoing with containing the least ingredient of persecution. The free spirit on which the American cause is founded, disdains to mix with such an impurity, and leaves it as rubbish fit only for narrow and suspicious minds to grovel in. Suspicion and persecution are weeds of the same dunghill, and flourish together. Had the Quakers minded their religion and their business, they might have lived through this dispute in enviable ease, and none would have molested them. The common phrase with these people is, '*Our principles are peace.*' To which may be replied, *and your practices are the reverse;* for never did the conduct of men oppose their own doctrine more notoriously than the present race of the Quakers. They have artfully changed themselves into a different sort of people to what they used to be, and yet have the address to persuade each other that they are not altered; like antiquated virgins, they see not the havoc deformity has made upon them, but pleasantly mistaking wrinkles for dimples, conceive themselves yet lovely and wonder at the stupid world for not admiring them.

Did no injury arise to the public by this apostacy of the Quakers from themselves, the public would have nothing to do with it; but as both the design and consequences are pointed against a cause in which the whole community are interested, it is therefore no longer a subject confined to the cognizance of the meeting only, but comes, as a matter of criminality, before either the authority of the particular state *in which* it is acted, or of the continent *against which* it operates. Every attempt, now, to support the authority of the king and parliament of Great Britain over America is treason against *every* state; therefore it is impossible that any *one* can pardon or screen from punishment an offender against *all.*

But to proceed: while the infatuated tories of this and other states were last spring talking of commissioners, accommodation, making the matter up, and the Lord knows what stuff and nonsense, their *good* king and ministry were glutting themselves with the revenge of reducing America to *unconditional submission*, and solacing each other with the certainty of conquering it in *one campaign.* The following quotations are from the parliamentary register of the debates of the house of lords, March 5th, 1776:

"The Americans," says Lord Talbot,* "have been obstinate, undutiful, and ungovernable from the very beginning, from their first early and infant settlements; and I am every day more and more convinced that this people never will be brought back to their duty, and the subordinate relation they stand in to this country, till *reduced to unconditional, effectual submission; no concession on our part, no lenity, no endurance*, will have any other effect but that of increasing their insolence."

"The struggle," says Lord Townsend,† "is now a

*Steward, of the king's household.

†Formerly, General Townsend, at Quebec, and late lord-lieutenant of Ireland.

struggle for power; the die is cast, and the *only point* which now remains to be determined, is in what manner the war can be most effectually prosecuted and speedily finished, in order to procure that *unconditional submission*, which has been so ably stated by the noble earl with the white staff;" (meaning Lord Talbot,) "and I have no reason to doubt that the measures now pursuing will put an end to the war in the course of a *single campaign*. Should it linger longer, we shall then have reason to expect that some foreign power will interfere, and take advantage of our domestic troubles and civil distractions."

Lord Littleton. "My sentiments are pretty well known. I shall only observe now that lenient measures have had no other effect than to produce insult after insult; that the more we conceded, the higher America rose in her demands, and the more insolent she has grown. It is for this reason that I am now for the most effective and decisive measures; and am of opinion that no alternative is left us, but to relinquish America for ever, or finally determine to compel her to acknowledge the legislative authority of this country; and it is the principle of an *unconditional submission* I would be for maintaining."

Can words be more expressive than these? Surely the tories will believe the tory lords! The truth is, they *do believe them* and know as fully as any whig on the continent knows, that the king and ministry never had the least design of an accommodation with America, but an absolute, unconditional conquest. And the part which the tories were to act, was, by downright lying, to endeavor to put the continent off its guard, and to divide and sow discontent in the minds of such whigs as they might gain and influence over. In short, to keep up a distraction here, that the force sent from England might be able to conquer in "*one campaign*." They and the ministry were, by a different game, playing into each others hands. The cry of the tories in England was,

"*No reconciliation, no accommodation*," in order to obtain the greater military force; while those in America were crying nothing but "*reconciliation and accommodation*," that the force sent might conquer with the less resistance.

But this "*single campaign*" is over, and America not conquered. The whole work is yet to do, and the force much less to do it with. Their condition is both despicable and deplorable: Out of cash—out of heart, and out of hope. A country furnished with arms and ammunition, as America now is, with three millions of inhabitants, and three thousand miles distant from the nearest enemy that can approach her, is able to look and laugh them in the face.

Howe appears to have two objects in view, either to go up the North River, or come to Philadelphia.

By going up the North River, he secures a retreat for his army through Canada, but the ships must return if they return at all, the same way they went; and as our army would be in the rear, the safety of their passage down is a doubtful matter. By such a motion he shuts himself from all supplies from Europe, but through Canada, and exposes his army and navy to the danger of perishing. The idea of his cutting off the communication between the eastern and southern states, by means of the North River, is merely visionary. He cannot do it by his shipping; because no ship can lay long at anchor in any river within reach of the shore; a single gun would drive a first rate vessel from such a station. This was fully proved last October at forts Washington and Lee, where one gun only, on each side of the river, obliged two frigates to cut and be towed off in an hour's time. Neither can he cut it off by his army: because the several posts they must occupy, would divide them almost to nothing, and expose them to be picked up by ours like pebbles on a river's bank; but admitting that he could, where is the

injury? Because, while his whole force is cantoned out, as sentries over the water, they will be very innocently employed, and the moment they march into the country, the communication opens.

The most probable object is Philadelphia, and the reasons are many. Howe's business in America is to conquer it, and in proportion as he finds himself unable to the task, he will employ his strength to distress women and weak minds, in order to effect through *their* fears what he cannot accomplish by his *own* force. His coming or attempting to come to Philadelphia is a circumstance that proves his weakness: for no general that felt himself able to take the field and attack his antagonist, would think of bringing his army into a city in the summer time; and this mere shifting the scene from place to place, without effecting any thing, has feebleness and cowardice on the face of it, and holds him up in a contemptible light to all who can reason justly and firmly. By several informations from New York, it appears that their army in general, both officers and men, have given up the expectation of conquering America; their eye now is fixed upon the spoil. They suppose Philadelphia to be rich with stores, and as they think to get more by robbing a town than by attacking an army, their movement towards this city is probable. We are not now contending against an army of soldiers, but against a band of thieves, who had rather plunder than fight, and have no other hope of conquest than by cruelty.

They expect to get a mighty booty, and strike another general panic, by making a sudden movement and getting possession of this city; but unless they can march *out* as well as *in*, or get the entire command of the river, to remove off their plunder, they may probably be stopped with the stolen goods upon them. They have never yet succeeded wherever they have been opposed, but at Fort Washington. At Charleston their defeat was effectual.

At Ticonderoga they ran away. In every skirmish at Kingsbridge and the White Plains they were obliged to retreat, and the instant our arms were turned upon them in the Jerseys, they turned likewise, and those that turned not were taken.

The necessity of always fitting our internal police to the circumstances of the times we live in, is something so strikingly obvious, that no sufficient objection can be made against it. The safety of all societies depends upon it; and where this point is not attended to, the consequences will either be a general languor or a tumult. The encouragement and protection of the good subjects of any state, and the suppression and punishment of bad ones, are the principal objects for which all authority is instituted, and the line in which it ought to operate. We have in this city a strange variety of men and characters, and the circumstances of the times require that they should be publicly known; it is not the number of tories that hurt us, so much as the not finding out who they are; men must now take one side or the other, and abide by the consequences: the Quakers, trusting to their short-sighted sagacity, have, most unluckily for them, made their declaration in their last Testimony, and we ought *now* to take them at their word. They have voluntarily read themselves out of the continental meeting, and cannot hope to be restored to it again but by payment and penitence. Men whose political principles are founded on avarice, are beyond the reach of reason, and the only cure of toryism of this cast, is to tax it. A substantial good drawn from a real evil, is of the same benefit to society, as if drawn from a virtue; and where men have not public spirit to render themselves serviceable, it ought to be the study of government to draw the best use possible from their vices. When the governing passion of any man, or set of men, is once known, the method of managing them is easy; for

even misers, whom no public virtue can impress, would become generous, could a heavy tax be laid upon covetousness.

The tories have endeavored to insure their property with the enemy, by forfeiting their reputation with us; from which may be justly inferred, that their governing passion is avarice. Make them as much afraid of losing on one side as on the other, and you stagger their toryism; make them more so, and you reclaim them; for their principle is to worship any power they are most afraid of.

This method of considering men and things together, opens into a large field for speculation, and affords me an opportunity of offering some observations on the state of our currency, so as to make the support of it go hand in hand with the suppression of disaffection and the encouragement of public spirit.

The thing which first presents itself in inspecting the state of the currency, is, that we have too much of it, and that there is a necessity of reducing the quantity, in order to increase the value. Men are daily growing poor by the very means they take to get rich; for in the same proportion that the prices of all goods on hand are raised, the value of all money laid by is reduced. A simple case will make this clear; let a man have £100, in cash, and as many goods on hand as will to-day sell for £20, but not content with the present market price, he raises them to £40, and by so doing obliges others, in their own defence, to raise cent. per cent. likewise; in this case it is evident that his hundred pounds laid by, is reduced fifty pounds in value; whereas, had the market lowered cent. per cent. his goods would have sold but for ten, but his hundred pounds would have risen in value to two hundred; because it would then purchase as many goods again, or support his family as long again as before. And, strange as it may seem, he is one hundred and fifty pounds the poorer for raising his goods, to what he would

have been had he lowered them; because the forty pounds which his goods sold for, is, by the general rise of the markets cent. per cent., rendered of no more value than the ten pounds would be had the market fallen in the same proportion; and, consequently, the whole difference of gain or loss is on the difference in value of the hundred pounds laid by, *viz.* from fifty to two hundred. This rage for raising goods is for several reasons much more the fault of the tories than the whigs; and yet the tories (to their shame and confusion ought they to be told of it) are by far the most noisy and discontented. The greatest part of the whigs, by being now either in the army or employed in some public service, are *buyers* only and not *sellers*, and as this evil has its origin in trade, it cannot be charged on those who are out of it.

But the grievance has now become too general to be remedied by partial methods, and the only effectual cure is to reduce the quantity of money: With half the quantity we should be richer than we are now, because the value of it would be doubled, and consequently our attachment to it increased; for it is not the number of dollars a man has, but how far they will go, that makes him either rich or poor.

These two points being admitted, *viz.* that the quantity of money is too great, and that the prices of goods can be only effectually reduced by reducing the quantity of the money, the next point to be considered is, the method how to reduce it.

The circumstances of the times, as before observed, require that the public characters of all men should *now* be fully understood, and the only general method of ascertaining it is by an oath or affirmation, renouncing all allegiance to the king of Great Britain, and to support the independence of the United States as declared by congress. Let, at the same time, a tax of ten, fifteen

or twenty per cent. per annum, to be collected quarterly, be levied on all property. These alternatives, by being perfectly voluntary, will take in all sorts of people. Here is the test; here is the tax. He who takes the former, conscientiously proves his affection to the cause, and binds himself to pay his quota by the best *services* in his power, and is thereby justly exempt from the latter; and those who choose the latter, pay their quota in money, to be excused from taking the former, or rather 'tis the price paid to us for their supposed, though mistaken, insurance with the enemy.

But this is only a part of the advantage which would arise by knowing the different characters of men. The whigs stake every thing on the issue of their arms, while the tories, by their disaffection, are sapping and undermining their strength; and, of consequence, the property of the whigs is the more exposed thereby; and whatever injury their estates may sustain by the movements of the enemy, must either be borne by themselves, who have done every thing which has *yet* been done, or by the tories, who have not only done nothing, but have by their disaffection, invited the enemy on.

In the present crisis we ought to know square by square, and house by house, who are in real allegiance with the United Independent States, and who are not. Let but the line be made clear and distinct, and all men will then know what they are to trust to. It would not only be good policy, but strict justice, to raise fifty or a hundred thousand pounds, or more, if it is necessary, out of the estates and property of the king of England's votaries, resident in Philadelphia, to be distributed, as a reward to those inhabitants of the city and state, who should turn out and repulse the enemy, should they attempt their march this way; and likewise, to bind the property of all such persons to make good the damages which that of the whigs might sustain. In the undis-

tinguishable mode of conducting a war, we frequently make reprisals at sea on the vessels of persons in England, who are friends to our cause compared with the resident tories among us.

In every former publication of mine, from *Common Sense* down to the last *Crisis*, I have generally gone on the charitable supposition, that the tories were rather a mistaken than a criminal people, and have applied argument after argument with all the candor and temper I was capable of, in order to set every part of the case clearly and fairly before them, and if possible to reclaim them from ruin to reason. I have done my duty by them and have now done with that doctrine, taking it for granted, that those who yet hold their disaffection, are, either a set of avaricious miscreants, who would sacrifice the continent to save themselves, or a banditti of hungry traitors, who are hoping for a division of the spoil. To which may be added, a list of crown or proprietary dependants, who, rather than go without a portion of power, would be content to share it with the devil. Of such men there is no hope; and their obedience will only be according to the danger that is set before them, and the power that is exercised over them.

A time will shortly arrive, in which, by ascertaining the characters of persons now, we shall be guarded against their mischiefs then; for in proportion as the enemy despair of conquest, they will be trying the arts of seduction and the force of fear by all the mischiefs they can inflict. But in war we may be certain of these two things, *viz.* that cruelty in an enemy, and motions made with more than usual parade, are always signs of weakness. He that can conquer, finds his mind too free and pleasant to be brutish; and he that intends to conquer, never makes too much show of his strength.

We now know the enemy we have to do with. While drunk with the certainty of victory, they disdained to be civil ; and in proportion as disappointment makes them sober, and their apprehensions of an European war alarm them, they will become cringing and artful ; honest they cannot be. But our answer to them, in either condition they may be in, is short and full,—"As free and independent states we are willing to make peace with you to-morrow, but we can neither hear nor reply in any other character."

If Britain cannot conquer us, it proves, that she is neither able to govern nor protect us, and our particular situation now is such, that any connection with her would be unwisely exchanging a half-defeated enemy for two powerful ones. Europe, by every appearance and information, is now on the eve, nay, on the morning twilight of a war, and any alliance with *George the third* brings *France* and *Spain* upon our backs ; a separation from him attaches them to our side ; therefore, the only road to *peace*, *honor* and commerce, is *Independence*.

Written this fourth year of the UNION, *which God preserve.*

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, April 19, 1777.

THE CRISIS.

NUMBER IV.

THOSE who expect to reap the blessings of freedom, must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it. The event of yesterday was one of those kind alarms which is just sufficient to rouse us to duty, without being of consequence enough to depress our fortitude. It is not a field of a few acres of ground, but a cause, that we are defending, and whether we defeat the enemy in one battle, or by degrees, the consequence will be the same.

Look back at the events of last winter and the present year, there you will find that the enemy's successes always contributed to reduce them. What they have gained in ground, they paid so dearly for in numbers, that their victories have in the end amounted to defeats. We have always been masters at the last push, and always shall be while we do our duty. Howe has been once on the banks of the Delaware, and from thence driven back with loss and disgrace: and why not be again driven from the Schuylkill? His condition and ours are very different. He has every body to fight, we have only his *one* army to cope with, and which wastes away at every engagement: we can not only reinforce, but can redouble our numbers; he is cut off from all supplies, and must sooner or later inevitably fall into our hands.

Shall a band of ten or twelve thousand robbers, who are this day fifteen hundred or two thousand men less in

strength than they were yesterday, conquer America, or subdue even a single state? The thing cannot be, unless we sit down and suffer them to do it. Another such a brush, notwithstanding we lost the ground, would, by still reducing the enemy, put them in a condition to be afterwards totally defeated.

Could our whole army have come up to the attack at one time, the consequences had probably been otherwise; but our having different parts of the Brandywine Creek to guard, and the uncertainty which road to Philadelphia the enemy would attempt to take, naturally afforded them an opportunity of passing with their main body to a place where only a part of ours could be posted; for it must strike every thinking man with conviction, that it requires a much greater force to oppose an enemy in several places, than is sufficient to defeat him in any one place.

Men who are sincere in defending their freedom, will always feel concern at every circumstance which seems to make against them; it is the natural and honest consequence of all affectionate attachments, and the want of it is a vice. But the dejection lasts only for a moment; they soon rise out of it with additional vigor; the glow of hope, courage and fortitude, will, in a little time, supply the place of every inferior passion, and kindle the whole heart into heroism.

There is a mystery in the countenance of some causes, which we have not always present judgment enough to explain. It is distressing to see an enemy advancing into a country, but it is the only place in which we can beat them, and in which we have always beaten them, whenever they made the attempt. The nearer any disease approaches to a crisis, the nearer it is to a cure. Danger and deliverance make their advances together, and it is only the last push, that one or the other takes the lead.

There are many men who will do their duty when it is not wanted; but a genuine public spirit always appears most when there is most occasion for it. Thank God! our army, though fatigued, is yet entire. The attack made by us yesterday, was under many disadvantages, naturally arising from the uncertainty of knowing which route the enemy would take; and, from that circumstance, the whole of our force could not be brought up together time enough to engage all at once. Our strength is yet reserved; and it is evident that Howe does not think himself a gainer by the affair, otherwise he would this morning have moved down and attacked General Washington.

Gentlemen of the city and country, it is in your power, by a spirited improvement of the present circumstance, to turn it to a real advantage. Howe is now weaker than before, and every shot will contribute to reduce him. You are more immediately interested than any other part of the continent; your all is at stake; it is not so with the general cause; you are devoted by the enemy to plunder and destruction: it is the encouragement which Howe, the chief of plunderers, has promised his army. Thus circumstanced, you may save yourselves by a manly resistance, but can have no hope in any other conduct. I never yet knew our brave general, or any part of the army, officers or men, out of heart, and I have seen them in circumstances a thousand times more trying than the present. It is only those that are not in action, that feel languor and heaviness, and the best way to rub it off is to turn out, and make sure work of it.

Our army must undoubtedly feel fatigue, and want a reinforcement of rest, though not of valor. Our own interest and happiness call upon us to give them every support in our power, and make the burden of the day, on which the safety of this city depends, as light as possible. Remember, gentlemen, that we have forces

both to the northward and southward of Philadelphia, and if the enemy be but stopped till those can arrive, this city will be saved, and the enemy finally routed. You have too much at stake to hesitate. You ought not to think an hour upon the matter, but to spring to action at once. Other states have been invaded, have likewise driven off the invaders. Now our time and turn is come, and perhaps the finishing stroke is reserved for us. When we look back on the dangers we have been saved from, and reflect on the success we have been blessed with, it would be sinful either to be idle or to despair.

I close this paper with a short address to General Howe. You, sir, are only lingering out the period that shall bring with it your defeat. You have yet scarce began upon the war, and the further you enter, the faster will your troubles thicken. What you now enjoy is only a respite from ruin; an invitation to destruction; something that will lead on to our deliverance at your expense. We know the cause which we are engaged in, and though a passionate fondness for it may make us grieve at every injury which threatens it, when the moment of concern is over, the determination to duty returns. We are not moved by the gloomy smile of a worthless king, but by the ardent glow of generous patriotism. We fight not to enslave, but to set a country free, and to make room upon the earth for honest men to live in. In such a cause we are sure that we are right; and we leave to you the despairing reflection of being the tool of a miserable tyrant.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, Sept. 12, 1777.

THE CRISIS.

NUMBER V.

TO GENERAL SIR WILLIAM HOWE.

TO argue with a man who has renounced the use and authority of reason, and whose philosophy consists in holding humanity in contempt, is like administering medicine to the dead, or endeavoring to convert an atheist by scripture. Enjoy, sir, your insensibility of feeling and reflecting.—It is the prerogative of animals. And no man will envy you those honors, in which a savage only can be your rival, and a bear your master.

As the generosity of this country rewarded your brother's services last war, with an elegant monument in Westminster Abbey, it is consistent that she should bestow some mark of distinction upon you. You certainly deserve her notice, and a conspicuous place in the catalogue of extraordinary persons. Yet it would be a pity to pass you from the world in state, and consign you to magnificent oblivion among the tombs, without telling the future beholder why. Judas is as much known as John, yet history ascribes their fame to very different actions.

Sir William hath undoubtedly merited a monument: but of what kind, or with what inscription, where placed or how embellished, is a question that would puzzle all the heralds of St. James's in the profoundest mood of historical deliberation. We are at no loss, sir, to ascertain your real character, but somewhat perplexed how to perpetuate its identity, and preserve it uninjured from the transformations of time or mistake. A statuary

may give a false expression to your bust, or decorate it with some equivocal emblems, by which you may happen to steal into reputation and impose upon the hereafter traditionary world. Ill nature or ridicule may conspire, or a variety of accidents combine to lessen, enlarge, or change Sir William's fame ; and no doubt but he who has taken so much pains to be singular in his conduct, would choose to be just as singular in his exit, his monument, and his epitaph.

The usual honors of the dead, to be sure, are not sufficiently sublime, to escort a character like you to the republic of dust and ashes ; for however men may differ in their ideas of grandeur or of government here, the grave is nevertheless a perfect republic. Death is not the monarch of the dead, but of the dying. The moment he obtains a conquest he loses a subject, and, like the foolish king you serve, will, in the end, war himself out all his dominions.

As a proper preliminary towards the arrangement of your funeral honors, we readily admit your new rank of *knighthood*. The title is perfectly in character, and is your own, more by merit than creation. There are knights of various orders, from the knight of the windmill to the knight of the post. The former is your patron for exploits, and the latter will assist you in settling your accounts. No honorary title could be more happily applied! The ingenuity is sublime! And your royal master hath discovered more genius in fitting you therewith, than in generating the most finished figure for a button, or descanting on the properties of a button mould.

But how, sir, shall we dispose of you? The invention of a statuary is exhausted, and Sir William is yet unprovided with a monument. America is anxious to bestow her funeral favors upon you, and wishes to do it in a manner that shall distinguish you from all the deceased heroes of the last war. The *Egyptian method*

of embalming is not known to the present age, and hieroglyphical pageantry hath outlived the science of deciphering it. Some other method, therefore, must be thought of to immortalize the new knight of the windmill and post. Sir William, thanks to his stars, is not oppressed with very delicate ideas. He has no ambition of being wrapped up and handled about in myrrh, aloes and cassia. Less expensive odors will suffice; and it fortunately happens, that the simple genius of America hath discovered the art of preserving bodies, and embellishing them too, with much greater frugality than the ancients. In a balmage, sir, of humble tar, you will be as secure as Pharaoh, and in a hieroglyphic of feathers, rival in finery all the mummies of Egypt.

As you have already made your exit from the moral world, and by numberless acts both of passionate and deliberate injustice engraved an "*here lyeth*" on your deceased honor, it must be mere affectation in you to pretend concern at the humors or opinions of mankind respecting you. What remains of you may expire at any time. The sooner the better. For he who survives his reputation, lives out of despite of himself, like a man listening to his own reproach.

Thus entombed and ornamented, I leave you to the inspection of the curious, and return to the history of your yet surviving actions.—The character of Sir William hath undergone some extraordinary revolutions since his arrival in America. It is now fixed and known; and we have nothing to hope from your candor or to fear from your capacity. Indolence and inability have too large a share in your composition, ever to suffer you to be any thing more than the hero of little villainies and unfinished adventures. That, which to some persons appeared moderation in you at first, was not produced by any real virtue of your own, but by a contrast of passions, dividing and holding you in perpetual irresolution. One

vice will frequently expel another, without the least merit in the man; as powers in contrary directions reduce each other to rest.

It became you to have supported a dignified solemnity of character; to have shown a superior liberality of soul; to have won respect by an obstinate perseverance in maintaining order, and to have exhibited on all occasions, such an unchangeable graciousness of conduct, that while we beheld in you the resolution of an enemy, we might admire in you the sincerity of a man. You came to America under the high-sounding titles of commander and commissioner; not only to suppress what you call rebellion by arms, but to shame it out of countenance by the excellence of your example. Instead of which, you have been the patron of low and vulgar frauds, the encourager of Indian cruelties; and have imported a cargo of vices blacker than those you pretended to suppress.

Mankind are not universally agreed in their determination of right and wrong; but there are certain actions which the consent of all nations and individuals hath branded with the unchangeable name of *meanness*. In the list of human vices we find some of such a refined constitution, that they cannot be carried into practice without seducing some virtue to their assistance; but *meanness* hath neither alliance nor apology. It is generated in the dust and sweepings of other vices, and is of such a hateful figure that all the rest conspire to disown it. Sir William, the commissioner of George the Third, hath at last vouchsafed to give it rank and pedigree. He has placed the fugitive at the council board, and dubbed it companion of the order of knighthood.

The particular act of meanness which I allude to in this description, is forgery. You, sir, have abetted and patronized the forging and uttering counterfeit continental bills. In the same New York newspapers in which your own proclamation under your masters

authority was published, offering, or pretending to offer, pardon and protection to the inhabitants of these states, there were repeated advertisements of counterfeit money for sale, and persons who have come officially from you, and under the sanction of your flag, have been taken up in attempting to put them off.

A conduct so basely mean in a public character is without precedent or pretence. Every nation on earth, whether friends or enemies, will unite in despising you. 'Tis an incendiary war upon society, which nothing can excuse or palliate.—An improvement upon beggarly villainy—and shows an inbred wretchedness of heart made up between the venomous malignity of a serpent and the spiteful imbecility of an inferior reptile.

The laws of any civilized country would condemn you to the gibbet without regard to your rank or titles, because it is an action foreign to the usage and custom of war; and should you fall into our hands, which pray God you may, it will be a doubtful matter whether we are to consider you as a military prisoner or a prisoner for felony.

Besides, it is exceedingly unwise and impolitic in you, or any persons in the English service, to promote or even encourage, or wink at the crime of forgery, in any case whatever. Because, as the riches of England, as a nation, are chiefly in paper, and the far greater part of trade among individuals is carried on by the same medium, that is, by notes and drafts on one another, they, therefore, of all people in the world, ought to endeavor to keep forgery out of sight, and, if possible, not to revive the idea of it. It is dangerous to make men familiar with a crime which they may afterwards practice to much greater advantage against those who first taught them. Several officers in the English army have made their exit at the gallows for forgery on their agents; for we all know, who know any thing of England, that

there is not a more necessitous body of men, taking them generally, than what the English officers are. They contrive to make a show at the expense of the tailors, and appear clean at the charge of the washer-women.

England, hath at this time, nearly two hundred million pounds sterling of public money in paper, for which she hath no real property: besides a large circulation of bank notes, bank post bills, and promissory notes and drafts of private bankers, merchants and tradesmen. She hath the greatest quantity of paper currency and the least quantity of gold and silver of any nation in Europe; the real specie which is about sixteen millions sterling, serves only as change in large sums, which are always made in paper, or for payment in small ones. Thus circumstanced, the nation is put to its wit's end, and obliged to be severe almost to criminality, to prevent the practice and growth of forgery. Scarcely a session passes at the Old Bailly, or an execution at Tyburn, but witnesseth this truth. Yet you, sir, regardless of the policy which her necessity obliges her to adopt, have made your whole army intimate with the crime. And as all armies, at the conclusion of a war, are too apt to carry into practice the vices of the campaign, it will probably happen, that England will hereafter abound in forgeries, to which art, the practitioners were first initiated under your authority in America. You, sir, have the honor of adding a new vice to the military catalogue; and the reason, perhaps, why the invention was reserved for you, is, because no general before was mean enough even to think of it.

That a man whose soul is absorbed in the low traffic of vulgar vice, is incapable of moving in any superior region, is clearly shown in you by the event of every campaign. Your military exploits have been without plan, object or decision. Can it be possible that you or your employers suppose that the possession of Philadelphia will be any ways equal to the expense or expectation of

the nation which supports you? What advantages does England derive from any achievements of yours? To *her* it is perfectly indifferent what place you are in, so long as the business of conquest is unperformed and the charge of maintaining you remains the same.

If the principal events of the three campaigns be attended to, the balance will appear strongly against you at the close of each; but the last, in point of importance to us, has exceeded the former two. It is pleasant to look back on dangers past, and equally as pleasant to meditate on present ones when the way out begins to appear. *That* period is now arrived, and the long doubtful winter of war is changing to the sweeter prospects of victory and joy. At the close of the campaign, in 1775, you were obliged to retreat from Boston. In the summer of 1776, you appeared with a numerous fleet and army in the harbor of New York. By what miracle the continent was preserved in that season of danger is a subject of admiration! If instead of wasting your time against Long Island, you had run up the North River, and landed any where above New York, the consequence must have been, that either you would have compelled General Washington to fight you with very unequal numbers, or he must have suddenly evacuated the city with the loss of nearly all the stores of the army, or have surrendered for want of provisions: the situation of the place naturally producing one or the other of these events.

The preparations made to defend New York were, nevertheless, wise and military; because your forces were then at sea, their number uncertain: storms, sickness, or a variety of accidents might have disabled their coming, or so diminished them on their passage, that those which survived would have been incapable of opening the campaign with any prospect of success; in which case the defence would have been sufficient and the place preserved: for cities that have been raised from nothing

with an infinitude of labor and expense, are not to be thrown away on the bare probability of their being taken. On these grounds the preparations made to maintain New York were as judicious as the retreat afterwards. While you, in the interim, let slip the *very* opportunity which seemed to put conquest in your power.

Through the whole of that campaign you had nearly double the forces which General Washington immediately commanded. The principal plan at that time, on our part, was to wear away the season with as little loss as possible, and to raise the army for the next year. Long Island, New York, Forts Washington and Lee were not defended after your superior force was known, under any expectation of their being finally maintained, but as a range of outworks, in the attacking of which your time might be wasted, your numbers reduced, and your vanity amused by possessing them on our retreat. It was intended to have withdrawn the garrison from Fort Washington after it had answered the former of those purposes, but the fate of that day put a prize into your hands without much honor to yourselves.

Your progress through the Jerseys was accidental; you had it not even in contemplation, or you would not have sent a principal part of your forces to Rhode Island before hand. The utmost hope of America in the year 1776, reached no higher than that she might not then be conquered. She had no expectation of defeating you in that campaign. Even the most cowardly tory allowed, that, could she withstand the shock of *that* summer her independence would be past a doubt. You had *then* greatly the advantage of her. You were formidable. Your military knowledge was supposed to be complete. Your fleets and forces arrived without an accident. You had neither experience nor reinforcements to wait for. You had nothing to do but to begin, and your chance lay in the first vigorous onset.

America was young and unskilled. She was obliged to trust her defence to time and practice ; and hath, by mere dint of perseverance, maintained her cause, and brought her enemy to a condition in which she is now capable of meeting him on any grounds.

It is remarkable that in the campaign of seventy-six, you gained no more, notwithstanding your great force, than what was given you by consent of evacuation, except Fort Washington : while every advantage obtained by us was by fair and hard fighting. The defeat of Sir Peter Parker was complete. The conquest of the Hessians at Trenton by the remains of a retreating army, which but a few days before you affected to despise, is an instance of heroic perseverance very seldom to be met with. And the victory over the British troops at Princeton, by a harassed and wearied party, who had been engaged the day before and marched all night without refreshment, is attended with such a scene of circumstances and superiority of generalship, as will ever give it a place on the first line in the history of great actions.

When I look back on the gloomy days of last winter and see America suspended by a thread, I feel a triumph of joy at the recollection of her delivery, and a reverence for the characters which snatched her from destruction. To doubt *now* would be a species of infidelity, and to forget the instruments which saved us *then* would be ingratitude.

The close of that campaign left us with the spirit of conquerors. The northern districts were relieved by the retreat of General Carleton over the lakes. The army under your command were hunted back and had their bounds prescribed. The continent began to feel its military importance, and the winter passed pleasantly away in preparations for the next campaign.

However confident you might be on your first arrival,

the course of the year seventy-six gave you some idea of the difficulty, if not impossibility, of conquest. To this reason I ascribe your delay in opening the campaign of seventy-seven. The face of matters, on the close of the former year, gave you no encouragement to pursue a discretionary war as soon as the spring admitted the taking the field: for though conquest, in that case, would have given you a double portion of fame, yet the experiment was too hazardous. The ministry, had you failed, would have shifted the whole blame upon you, charged you with having acted without orders, and condemned at once both your plan and your execution.

To avoid those misfortunes, which might have involved you and your money accounts in perplexity and suspicion, you prudently waited the arrival of a plan of operations from England, which was, that you should proceed for Philadelphia by the way of the Chesapeake, and that Burgoyne, after reducing Ticonderoga, should take his route by Albany, and, if necessary, join you.

The splendid laurels of the last campaign have flourished in the north. In that quarter America hath surprised the world, and laid the foundation of her this year's glory. The conquest of Ticonderoga (if it may be called a conquest) has, like all your other victories, led on to ruin. Even the provisions taken in that fortress (which by General Burgoyne's return was sufficient in bread and flour for nearly 5,000 men for ten weeks, and in beef and pork for the same number of men for one month) served only to hasten his overthrow, by enabling him to proceed to Saratoga, the place of his destruction. A short review of the operations of the last campaign will show the condition of affairs on both sides.

You have taken Ticonderoga and marched into Philadelphia. These are all the events which the year hath produced on your part. A trifling campaign indeed, compared with the expenses of England and the con-

quest of the continent. On the other side, a considerable part of your northern force has been routed by the New York militia under General Herkemer. Fort Stanwix hath bravely survived a compound attack of soldiers and savages, and the besiegers have fled. The battle of Bennington has put a thousand prisoners into our hands, with all their arms, stores, artillery and baggage. General Burgoyne in two engagements has been defeated ; himself, his army, and all that were his and theirs are now ours. Ticonderoga and Independence are retaken, and not the shadow of an enemy remains in all the northern districts. At this instant we have upwards of eleven thousand prisoners, between sixty and seventy pieces of brass ordinance, besides small arms, tents, stores, &c.

In order to know the real value of those advantages we must reverse the scene, and suppose General Gates and the force he commanded, to be at your mercy as prisoners, and General Burgoyne with his army of soldiers and savages to be already joined to you in Pennsylvania. So dismal a picture can scarcely be looked at. It hath all the tracings and colorings of horror and despair ; and excites the most swelling emotions of gratitude by exhibiting the miseries we are so graciously preserved from.

I admire this distribution of laurels around the continent. It is the earnest of future union. South Carolina has had her day of suffering and of fame ; and the other southern states have exerted themselves in proportion to the force that invaded or insulted them. Towards the close of the campaign in seventy-six, these middle states were called upon and did their duty nobly. They were witnesses to the almost expiring flame of human freedom. It was the close struggle of life and death,—the line of invisible division ; and on which, the unabated fortitude of a Washington prevailed, and

saved the spark that has since blazed in the north with unrivalled lustre.

Let me ask, sir, what great exploits have you performed? Through all the variety of changes and opportunities which this war hath produced, I know no one action of yours that can be styled masterly. You have moved in and out, backward and forward, round and round, as if valor consisted in a military jig. The history and figure of your movements would be truly ridiculous could they be justly delineated. They resemble the labors of a puppy pursuing his tail; the end is still at the same distance, and all the turnings round must be done over again.

The first appearance of affairs at Ticonderoga wore such an unpromising aspect, that it was necessary, in July, to detach a part of the forces to the support of that quarter, which were otherwise destined or intended to act against you, and this, perhaps, has been the means of postponing your downfall to another campaign. The destruction of one army at a time is work enough. We know, sir, what we are about, what we have to do, and how to do it.

Your progress from the Chesapeake was marked by no capital stroke of policy or heroism. Your principal aim was to get General Washington between the Delaware and Schuylkill and between Philadelphia and your army. In that situation, with a river on each of his flanks, which united about five miles below the city, and your army above him, you could have intercepted his reinforcements and supplies, cut off all his communication with the country, and, if necessary, have dispatched assistance to open a passage for General Burgoyne. This scheme was too visible to succeed, for had General Washington suffered you to command the open country above him, I think it a very reasonable conjecture that the conquest of Burgoyne would not have taken place

because you could, in that case, have relieved him. It was therefore necessary, while that important victory was in suspense, to trepan *you* into a situation, in which you could only be on the defensive, without the power of affording him assistance. The manœuvre had its effect and Burgoyne was conquered.

There has been something unmilitary passive in you from the time of your passing the Schuylkill and getting possession of Philadelphia to the close of the campaign. You mistook a trap for a conquest, the probability of which had been made known to Europe, and the edge of your triumph taken off by our own information long before.

Having got you into this situation, a scheme for a general attack upon you at Germantown was carried into execution on the fourth of October, and though the success was not equal to the excellence of the plan, yet the attempting it proved the genius of America to be on the rise, and her power approaching to superiority. The obscurity of the morning was your best friend, for a fog is always favorable to a hunted enemy. Some weeks after this, you likewise planned an attack on General Washington while at Whitemarsh. Marched out with infinite parade, but on finding him preparing to attack you the next morning, you prudently cut about and retreated to Philadelphia, with all the precipitation of a man conquered in imagination.

Immediately after the battle of Germantown, the probability of Burgoyne's defeat gave a new policy to affairs in Pennsylvania, and it was judged most consistent with the general safety of America to wait the issue of the Northern campaign. Slow and sure is sound work. The news of that victory arrived in our camp on the 18th of October, and no sooner did the shout of joy and the report of the thirteen cannon reach your ears, than you resolved upon a retreat, and the next day, that is,

on the 19th, withdrew your drooping army into Philadelphia. This movement was evidently dictated by fear; and carried with it a positive confession that you dreaded a second attack. It was hiding yourself among women and children, and sleeping away the choicest part of a campaign in expensive inactivity. An army in a city can never be a conquering army. The situation admits only of defense. It is mere shelter; and every military power in Europe will conclude you to be eventually defeated.

The time when you made this retreat was the very time you ought to have fought a battle, in order to put yourself in a condition of recovering in Pennsylvania what you had lost at Saratoga. And the reason why you did not, must be either prudence or cowardice; the former supposes your inability, and the latter needs no explanation. I draw no conclusions, sir, but such as are naturally deduced from known and visible facts, and such as will always have a being while the facts which produced them remain unaltered.

After this retreat a new difficulty arose which exhibited the power of Britain in a very contemptible light, which was the attack and defence of Mud Island. For several weeks did that little unfinished fortress stand out against all the attempts of Admiral and General Howe. It was the fable of Bendar realized on the Delaware. Scheme after scheme, and force upon force were tried and defeated. The garrison, with scarce any thing to cover them but their bravery, survived in the midst of mud, shot and shells, and were at last obliged to give it up, more to the powers of time and gunpowder than to the military superiority of the besiegers.

It is my sincere opinion that matters are in a much worse condition with you than what is generally known. Your master's speech at the opening of parliament is like a soliloquy on ill luck. It shows him to be coming

a little to his reason, for sense of pain is the first symptom of recovery in profound stupefactions. His condition is deplorable. He is obliged to submit to all the insults of France and Spain, without daring to know or resent them; and thankful for the most trivial evasions to the most humble remonstrances. The time *was* when he could not *deign* an answer to a petition from America, and the time now *is* when he dare not *give* an answer to an affront from France. The capture of Burgoyne's army will sink his consequence as much in Europe as in America. In his speech he expresses his suspicions at the warlike preparations of France and Spain, and as he has only the one army which you command to support his character in the world with, it remains very uncertain when, or in what quarter, it will be most wanted or can be best employed; and this will partly account for the great care you take to keep it from action and attacks, for should Burgoyne's fate be yours, which it probably will, England may take her endless farewell not only of all America but of all the West Indies.

Never did a nation invite destruction upon itself with the eagerness and ignorance with which Britain had done. Bent upon the ruin of a young and unoffending country, she hath drawn the sword that hath wounded herself to the heart, and in the agony of her resentment hath applied a poison for a cure. Her conduct towards America is a compound of rage and lunacy; she aims at the government of it, yet preserves neither dignity nor character in her methods to obtain it. Were government a mere manufacture or article of commerce, immaterial by whom it should be made or sold, we might as well employ her as another, but when we consider it as the fountain from whence the general manners and morality of a country take their rise, that the persons intrusted with the execution thereof are by their serious

example and authority to support these principles, how abominably absurd is the idea of being hereafter governed by a set of men who have been guilty of forgery, perjury, treachery, theft, and every species of villainy which the lowest wretches on earth could practice or invent. What greater public curse can befall any country than to be under such authority, and what greater blessing than to be delivered therefrom? The soul of any man of sentiment would rise in brave rebellion against them and spurn them from the earth.

The malignant and venomous tempered General Vaughan has amused his savage fancy in burning the whole town of Kingston, in York government, and the late governor of that state, Mr. Tryon, in his letter to General Parsons, has endeavored to justify it, and declared his wish to burn the houses of every committeeman in the country. Such a confession from one who was once entrusted with the powers of civil government, is a reproach to the character. But it is the wish and the declaration of a man whom anguish and disappointment have driven to despair, and who is daily decaying into the grave with constitutional rottenness.

There is not in the compass of language a sufficiency of words to express the baseness of your king, his ministry and his army. They have refined upon villainy till it wants a name. To the fiercer vices of former ages they have added the dregs and scummings of the most finished rascality, and are so completely sunk in serpentine deceit, that there is not left among them *one* generous enemy.

From such men and such masters may the gracious hand of Heaven preserve America! And though the sufferings she now endures are heavy and severe, they are like straws in the wind compared to the weight of evils she would feel under the government of your king, and his pensioned parliament.

There is something in meanness which excites a species of resentment that never subsides, and something in cruelty which stirs up the heart to the highest agony of human hatred; Britain hath filled up both these characters till no addition can be made, and hath not reputation left with us to obtain credit for the slightest promise. The will of God hath parted us, and the deed is registered for eternity. When she shall be a spot scarcely visible among the nations, America shall flourish, the favorite of Heaven and the friend of mankind.

For the domestic happiness of Britain and the peace of the world, I wish she had not a foot of land but what is circumscribed within her own island. Extent of dominion hath been her ruin, and instead of civilizing others hath brutalized herself. Her late reduction of India, under Clive and his successors, was not so properly a conquest as an extermination of mankind. She is the only power who could practice the prodigal barbarity of tying men to the mouths of loaded cannon and blowing them away. It happens that General Burgoyne, who made the report of that horrid transaction, in the house of commons, is now a prisoner with us, and though an enemy, I can appeal to him for the truth of it, being confident that he neither can nor will deny it. Yet Clive received the approbation of the last parliament.

When we take a survey of mankind, we cannot help cursing the wretch, who, to the unavoidable misfortunes of nature, shall wilfully add the calamities of war. One would think there were evils enough in the world without studying to increase them, and that life is sufficiently short without shaking the sand that measures it. The histories of Alexander, and Charles of Sweden, are the histories of human devils; a good man cannot think of their actions without abhorrence, nor of their deaths without rejoicing. To see the bounties of heaven de-

stroyed, the beautiful face of nature laid waste, and the choicest works of creation and art tumbled into ruin, would fetch a curse from the soul of piety itself. But in this country the aggravation is heightened by a new combination of affecting circumstances. America was young, and, compared with other countries, was virtuous. None but a Herod of uncommon malice would have made war upon infancy and innocence: and none but a people of the most finished fortitude, dared, under those circumstances, to have resisted the tyranny. The natives, or their ancestors, had fled from the former oppressions of England, and with the industry of bees had changed a wilderness into a habitable world. To Britain they were indebted for nothing. The country was the gift of heaven, and God alone is their Lord and Sovereign.

The time, sir, will come when you, in a melancholy hour, shall reckon up your miseries by your murders in America. Life, with you, begins to wear a clouded aspect. The vision of pleasurable delusion is wearing away, and changing to the barren wild of age and sorrow. The poor reflection of having served your king will yield you no consolation in your parting moments. He will crumble to the same undistinguished ashes with yourself, and have sins enough of his own to answer for. It is not the farcical benedictions of a bishop, nor the cringing hypocrisy of a court of chaplains, nor the formality of an act of parliament, that can change guilt into innocence, or make the punishment *one* pang the less. You may, perhaps, be unwilling to be serious, but this destruction of the goods of Providence, this havoc of the human race, and this sowing the world with mischief, must be accounted for to him who made and governs it. To us they are only present sufferings, but to him they are deep rebellions.

If there is a sin superior to every other, it is that of willful and offensive war. Most other sins are circum-

scribed within narrow limits, that is, the power of *one* man cannot give them a very general extension, and many kinds of sins have only a mental existence from which no infection arises; but he who is the author of a war, lets loose the whole contagion of hell, and opens a vein that bleeds a nation to death. We leave it to England and Indians to boast of these honors; we feel no thirst for such savage glory; a nobler flame, a purer spirit animates America. She hath taken up the sword of virtuous defence; she hath bravely put herself between Tyranny and Freedom, between a curse and a blessing, determined to expel the one and protect the other.

It is the object only of war that makes it honorable. And if there was ever *a just* war since the world began, it is this in which America is now engaged. She invaded no land of yours. She hired no mercenaries to burn your towns, nor Indians to massacre their inhabitants. She wanted nothing from you, and was indebted for nothing to you: and thus circumstanced, her defence is honorable and her prosperity is certain.

Yet it is not on the *justice* only, but likewise on the *importance* of this cause that I ground my seemingly enthusiastic confidence of our success. The vast extension of America makes her of too much value in the scale of Providence, to be cast, like a pearl before swine, at the feet of an European island; and of much less consequence would it be that Britain were sunk in the sea than that America should miscarry. There hath been such a chain of extraordinary events in the discovery of this country at first, in the peopling and planting it afterwards, in the rearing and nursing it to its present state, and in the protection of it through the present war, that no man can doubt, but Providence hath some nobler end to accomplish, than the gratification of the petty elector of Hanover, or the ignorant and insignificant king of Britain.

As the blood of the martyrs hath been the seed of the Christian church, so the political persecutions of England will and hath already enriched America with industry, experience, union, and importance. Before the present era she was a mere chaos of uncemented colonies, individually exposed to the ravages of the Indians and the invasion of any power that Britain should be at war with. She had nothing that she could call her own. Her felicity depended upon accident. The convulsions of Europe might have thrown her from one conqueror to another, till she had been the slave of all, and ruined by every one; for until she had spirit enough to become her own master, there was no knowing to which master she should belong. *That* period, thank God, is past, and she is no longer the dependent, disunited colonies of Britain, but the Independent and United States of America,—knowing no master but heaven and herself. You, or your king, may call this "delusion," "rebellion," or what name you please. To us it is perfectly indifferent. The issue will determine the character, and time will give it a name as lasting as his own.

You have now, sir, tried the fate of three campaigns, and can fully declare to England, that nothing is to be got on your part, but blows and broken bones, and nothing on hers but waste of trade and credit, and an increase of poverty and taxes. You are now only where you might have been two years ago, without the loss of a single ship, and yet not a step more forward towards the conquest of the continent; because, as I have already hinted, "an army in a city can never be a conquering army." The full amount of your losses, since the beginning of the war, exceeds twenty thousand men, besides millions of treasure, for which you have nothing in exchange. Our expenses, though great, are circulated within ourselves. Yours is a direct sinking of money, and that from both ends at once; first, in hiring troops

out of the nation, and in paying them afterwards, because the money in neither case can again return to Britain. We are already in possession of the prize, you only in pursuit of it. To us it is a real treasure, to you it would be only an empty triumph. Our expenses will repay themselves with tenfold interest, while yours entail upon you everlasting poverty.

Take a review, sir, of the ground which you have gone over, and let it teach you policy, if it cannot honesty. You stand but on a very tottering foundation. A change of the ministry in England may probably bring your measures into question, and your head to the block. Clive, with all his successes, had some difficulty in escaping, and yours, being all a war of losses, will afford you less pretensions, and your enemies more grounds for impeachment.

Go home, sir, and endeavor to save the remains of your ruined country, by a just representation of the madness of her measures. A few moments, well applied, may yet preserve her from political destruction. I am not one of those who wish to see Europe in a flame, because I am persuaded that such an event will not shorten the war. The rupture, at present, is confined between the two powers of America and England. England finds that she cannot conquer America, and America has no wish to conquer England. You are fighting for what you never can obtain, and we defending what we mean never to part with. A few words, therefore, settles the bargain. Let England mind her own business and we will mind ours. Govern yourselves, and we will govern ourselves. You may then trade where you please, unmolested by us, and we will trade where we please, unmolested by you; and such articles as we can purchase of each other, better than elsewhere, may be mutually done. If it were possible that you could carry on the war for twenty years you must still come to this point at last, or worse, and

the sooner you think of it the better it will be for you. My official situation enables me to know the repeated insults which Britain is obliged to put up with from foreign powers, and the wretched shifts that she is driven to, to gloss them over. Her reduced strength and exhausted coffers in a three years' war with America, hath given a powerful superiority to France and Spain. She is not now a match for them. But if neither councils can prevail on her to think, nor sufferings awaken her to reason, she must e'en go on, till the honor of England becomes a proverb of contempt, and Europe dub her the Land of Fools.

I am, Sir, with every wish for an honorable peace,
Your friend, enemy, and countryman,

COMMON SENSE.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF AMERICA.

WITH all the pleasure with which a man exchanges bad company for good, I take my leave of Sir William and return to you. It is now nearly three years since the tyranny of Britain received its first repulse by the arms of America. A period which has given birth to a new world, and erected a monument to the folly of the old.

I cannot help being sometimes surprised at the complimentary references which I have seen and heard made to ancient histories and transactions. The wisdom, civil governments, and sense of honor of the states of Greece and Rome, are frequently held up as objects of excellence and imitation. Mankind have lived to very little purpose, if, at this period of the world, they must go two or three thousand years back for lessons and examples. We do great injustice to ourselves by placing them in

such a superior line. We have no just authority for it, neither can we tell why it is that we should suppose ourselves inferior.

Could the mist of antiquity be cleared away, and men and things be viewed as they really were, it is more than probable that they would admire us, rather than we them. America has surmounted a greater variety and combination of difficulties, than, I believe, ever fell to the share of any one people, in the same space of time, and has replenished the world with more useful knowledge and sounder maxims of civil government than were ever produced in any age before. Had it not been for America, there had been no such thing as freedom left throughout the whole universe. England hath lost hers in a long chain of right reasoning from wrong principles, and it is from this country, now, that she must learn the resolution to redress herself, and the wisdom how to accomplish it.

The Grecians and Romans were strongly possessed of the *spirit* of liberty but *not the principle*, for at the time that they were determined not to be slaves themselves, they employed their power to enslave the rest of mankind. But this distinguished era is blotted by no one misanthropical vice. In short, if the principle on which the cause is founded, the universal blessings that are to arise from it, the difficulties that accompanied it, the wisdom with which it has been debated, the fortitude by which it has been supported, the strength of the power which we had to oppose, and the condition in which we undertook it, be all taken in one view, we may justly style it the most virtuous and illustrious revolution that ever graced the history of mankind.

A good opinion of ourselves is exceedingly necessary in private life, but absolutely necessary in public life, and of the utmost importance in supporting national character. I have no notion of yielding the palm of the

United States to any Grecians or Romans that were ever born. We have equalled the bravest in times of danger, and excelled the wisest in the construction of civil governments.

From this agreeable eminence let us take a review of present affairs. The spirit of corruption is so inseparably interwoven with British politics, that their ministry suppose all mankind are governed by the same motives. The have no idea of a people submitting even to temporary inconvenience from an attachment to rights and privileges. Their plans of business are calculated *by* the hour and *for* the hour, and are uniform in nothing but the corruption which gives them birth. They never had, neither have they at this time, any regular plan for the conquest of America by arms. They know not how to go about it, neither have they power to effect it if they did know. The thing is not within the compass of human practicability, for America is too extensive either to be fully conquered or *passively* defended. But she may be *actively* defended by defeating or making prisoners of the army that invades her. And this is the only system of defence that can be effectual in a large country.

There is something in a war carried on by invasion which makes it differ in circumstances from any other mode of war, because he who conducts it cannot tell whether the ground he gains be for him, or against him, when he first obtains it. In the winter of 1776, General Howe marched with an air of victory through the Jerseys, the consequence of which was his defeat; and General Burgoyne at Saratoga experienced the same fate from the same cause. The Spaniards, about two years ago, were defeated by the Algerines in the same manner, that is, their first triumphs became a trap in which they were totally routed. And whoever will attend to the circumstances and events of a war carried on by invasion, will

find, that any invader, in order to be finally conquered must first begin to conquer.

I confess myself one of those who believe the loss of Philadelphia to be attended with more advantages than injuries. The case stood thus: The enemy imagined Philadelphia to be of more importance to us than it really was; for we all know that it had long ceased to be a port: not a cargo of goods had been brought into it for near a twelvemonth, nor any fixed manufactories, nor even ship-building, carried on in it; yet as the enemy believed the conquest of it to be practicable, and to that belief added the absurd idea that the soul of all America was centered there, and would be conquered there, it naturally follows that their possession of it, by not answering the end proposed, must break up the plans they had so foolishly gone upon, and either oblige them to form a new one, for which their present strength is not sufficient, or to give over the attempt.

We never had so small an army to fight against, nor so fair an opportunity of final success as *now*. The death wound is already given. The day is ours if we follow it up. The enemy, by his situation, is within our reach, and by his reduced strength is within our power. The ministers of Britain may rage as they please, but our part is to conquer their armies. Let them wrangle and welcome, but let it not draw our attention from the *one* thing needful. *Here*, *in this* spot is our business to be accomplished, our felicity secured. What we have now to do is as clear as light, and the way to do it is as straight as a line. It needs not to be commented upon, yet, in order to be perfectly understood, I will put a case that cannot admit of a mistake.

Had the armies under Generals Howe and Burgoyne been united, and taken post at Germantown, and had the northern army under General Gates been joined to that under General Washington, at Whitemarsh, the conse-

quence would have been a general action; and if in that action we had killed and taken the same number of officers and men, that is, between nine and ten thousand, with the same quantity of artillery, arms, stores, &c., as have been taken at the northward, and obliged General Howe with the remains of his army, that is, with the same number he now commands, to take shelter in Philadelphia, we should certainly have thought ourselves the greatest heroes in the world; and should, as soon as the season permitted, have collected together all the force of the continent and laid siege to the city, for it requires a much greater force to besiege an enemy in a town than to defeat them in the field. The case *now* is just the same as if it had been produced by the means I have here supposed. Between nine and ten thousand have been killed and taken, all their stores are in our possession, and General Howe, in consequence of that victory, has thrown himself for shelter into Philadelphia.

He, or his trifling friend Galloway, may form what pretences they please, yet no just reason can be given for their going into winter quarters so early as the 19th of October, but their apprehensions of a defeat if they continued out, or their conscious inability of keeping the field with safety. I see no advantage which can arise to America by hunting the enemy from state to state. It is a triumph without a prize, and wholly unworthy the attention of a people determined to conquer. Neither can any state promise itself security while the enemy remains in a condition to transport themselves from one part of the continent to another. Howe, likewise, cannot conquer where we have no army to oppose, therefore any such removals in him are mean and cowardly, and reduces Britain to a common pilferer. If he retreats from Philadelphia, he will be despised; if he stays, he may be shut up and starved out, and the country, if he advances into it, may become his Saratoga. He has his

choice of evils and we of opportunities. If he moves early, it is not only a sign but a proof that he expects no reinforcement, and his delays will prove that he either waits for the arrival of a plan to go upon, or force to execute it, or both; in *which* case our strength will increase more than his, therefore in *any* case we cannot be wrong if we do but proceed.

The particular condition of Pennsylvania deserves the attention of all the other states. Her military strength must not be estimated by the number of inhabitants. Here are men of all nations, characters, professions and interests. Here are the firmest whigs, surviving, like sparks in the ocean, unquenched and uncooled in the midst of discouragement and disaffection. Here are men losing their all with cheerfulness, and collecting fire and fortitude from the flames of their own estates. Here are others skulking in secret, many making a market of the times, and numbers who are changing to whig and tory with the circumstances of every day.

It is by mere dint of fortitude and perseverance that the whigs of this state have been able to maintain so good a countenance, and do even what they have done. We want help, and the sooner it can arrive the more effectual it will be. The invaded state, be it which it may, will always feel an additional burden upon its back, and be hard set to support its civil power with sufficient authority; and this difficulty will always rise or fall, in proportion as the other states throw in their assistance to the common cause.

The enemy will most probably make many manœuvres at the opening of this campaign, to amuse and draw off the attention of the several states from the *one thing needful.* We may expect to hear of alarms and pretended expeditions to *this* place and *that* place, to the Southward, the Eastward and the Northward, all intended to prevent our forming into one formidable body.

The less the enemy's strength is, the more subtleties of this kind will they make use of. Their existence depends upon it, because the force of America, when collected, is sufficient to swallow their present army up. It is therefore our business to make short work of it, by bending our whole attention to *this one principal point*, for the instant that the main body under General Howe is defeated, all the inferior alarms throughout the continent, like so many shadows, will follow his downfall.

The only way to finish a war with the least possible bloodshed, or perhaps without any, is to collect an army, against the power of which the enemy shall have no chance. By not doing this, we prolong the war, and double both the calamities and the expenses of it. What a rich and happy country would America be, were she, by a vigorous exertion, to reduce Howe as she has reduced Burgoyne. Her currency would rise to millions beyond its present value. Every man would be rich, and every man would have it in his power to be happy. And why not do these things? What is there to hinder? America is her own mistress and can do what she pleases.

If we had not at this time a man in the field, we could, nevertheless, raise an army in a few weeks sufficient to overwhelm all the force which General Howe at present commands. Vigor and determination will do any thing and every thing. We began the war with this kind of spirit, why not end it with the same? Here, gentlemen, is the enemy. Here is the army. The interest, the happiness of all America, is centered in this half ruined spot. Come on and help us. Here are laurels, come and share them. Here are tories, come and help us to expel them. Here are whigs that will make you welcome, and enemies that dread your coming.

The worst of all policy is that of doing things by halves. Penny wise and pound foolish, has been the ruin of thousands. The present spring, if rightly im-

proved, will free us from all our troubles, and save us the expense of millions. We have now only one army to cope with. No opportunity can be fairer; no prospect more promising. I shall conclude this paper with a few outlines of a plan, either for filling up the battalions with expedition, or for raising an additional force, for any limited time, on any sudden emergency.

That in which every man is interested, is every man's duty to support. And any burden which falls equally on all men, and from which every man is to receive an equal benefit, is consistent with the most perfect ideas of liberty. I would wish to revive something of that virtuous ambition which first called America into the field. Then every man was eager to do his part, and perhaps the principal reason why we have in any degree fallen therefrom, is because we did not set a sufficient value by it at first, but left it to blaze out of itself, instead of regulating and preserving it by just proportions of rest and service.

Suppose any state whose number of effective inhabitants was 80,000, should be required to furnish 3,200 men towards the defence of the continent, on any sudden emergency.

First, Let the whole number of effective inhabitants be divided into hundreds; then if each of those hundreds turn out four men, the whole number of 3,200 will be had.

Secondly, Let the names of each hundred men be entered in a book, and let four dollars be collected from each man, with as much more as any of the gentlemen, whose abilities can afford it, shall please to throw in, which gifts likewise shall be entered against the donors' names.

Thirdly, Let the sums so collected be offered as a present, over and above the bounty of twenty dollars, to any four who may be inclined to propose themselves as

volunteers. If more than four offer, the majority of the subscribers present shall determine which ; if none offer, then four out of the hundred shall be taken by lot, who shall be entitled to the said sums, and shall either go, or provide others that will, in the space of six days.

Fourthly, As it will always happen, that in the space of ground on which an hundred men shall live, there will be always a number of persons who, by age and infirmity, are incapable of doing personal service, and as such persons are generally possessed of the greatest part of the property in any country, their portion of service, therefore, will be to furnish each man with a blanket, which will make a regimental coat, jacket, and breeches, or clothes in lieu thereof, and another for a watch cloak, and two pair of shoes—for however choice people may be of these things matters not in cases of this kind—those who live always in houses can find many ways to keep themselves warm, but it is a shame and a sin to suffer a soldier in the field to want a blanket while there is one in the country.

Should the clothing not be wanted, the superannuated or infirm persons possessing property, may, in lieu thereof, throw in their money subscriptions towards increasing the bounty ; for though age will naturally exempt a person from personal service, it cannot exempt him from his share of the charge, because the men are raised for the defence of property and liberty, jointly.

There never was a scheme against which objections might not be raised. But this alone is not a sufficient reason for rejection. The only line to judge truly upon, is to draw out and admit all the objections which can fairly be made, and place against them all the contrary qualities, conveniencies and advantages, then by striking a balance you come at the true character of any scheme, principle or position.

The most material advantages of the plan here pro-

posed are, ease, expedition, and cheapness; yet the men so raised get a much larger bounty than is any where at present given; because all the expenses, extravagance, and consequent idleness of recruiting are saved or prevented. The country incurs no new debt, nor interest thereon; the whole matter being all settled at once and entirely done with. It is a subscription answering all the purposes of a tax, without either the charge or trouble of collecting. The men are ready for the field with the greatest possible expedition, because it becomes the duty of the inhabitants themselves, in every part of the country, to find their proportion of men, instead of leaving it to a recruiting sergeant, who, be he ever so industrious, cannot know always where to apply.

I do not propose this as a regular digested plan, neither will the limits of this paper admit of any further remarks upon it. I believe it to be a hint capable of much improvement, and as such submit it to the public.

COMMON SENSE.

Lancaster, March 21, 1778.

THE CRISIS.

NUMBER VI.

TO THE EARL OF CARLISLE, GENERAL CLINTON, AND WILLIAM EDEN, Esq., BRITISH COMMISSIONERS, AT NEW YORK.

THERE is a dignity in the warm passions of a whig, which is never to be found in the cold malice of a tory. In the one, nature is only heated—in the other she is poisoned. The instant the former has it in his power to punish, he feels a disposition to forgive; but the canine venom of the latter knows no relief but revenge. This general distinction will, I believe, apply in all cases, and suit as well the meridian of England as America.

As I presume your last proclamation will undergo the strictures of other pens, I shall confine my remarks to only a few parts thereof. All that you have said might have been comprised in half the compass. It is tedious and unmeaning, and only a repetition of your former follies, with here and there an offensive aggravation. Your cargo of pardons will have no market—It is unfashionable to look at them—even speculation is at an end. They have become a perfect drug, and no way calculated for the climate.

In the course of your proclamation you say, "The policy as well as the *benevolence of Great Britain* have thus far checked the extremes of war, when they tended to distress a people still considered as their fellow subjects, and to desolate a country shortly to become again a source of mutual advantage." What you mean by "the *benevolence* of Great Britain" is to me inconceivable.

To put a plain question ; do you consider yourselves men or devils? For until this point is settled, no determinate sense can be put upon the expression. You have already equalled, and in many cases excelled, the savages of either Indies ; and if you have yet a cruelty in store, you must have imported it, unmixed with every human material, from the original warehouse of hell.

To the interposition of Providence, and her blessings on our endeavors, and not to *British benevolence*, are we indebted for the short chain that limits your ravages. Remember you do not at this time, command a foot of land on the continent of America. Staten Island, York Island, a small part of Long Island, and Rhode Island, circumscribe your power; and even those you hold at the expense of the West Indies. To avoid a defeat, and prevent a desertion of your troops, you have taken up your quarters in holes and corners of inaccessible security ; and in order to conceal what every one can perceive, you now endeavor to impose your weakness upon us for an act of mercy. If you think to succeed by such shadowy devices, you are but infants in the political world ; you have the A, B, C, of stratagem yet to learn, and are wholly ignorant of the people you have to contend with. Like men in a state of intoxication, you forget that the rest of the world have eyes, and that the same stupidity which conceals you from yourselves exposes you to their satire and contempt.

The paragraph which I have quoted, stands as an introduction to the following : "But when that country (America) professes the unnatural design, not only of estranging herself from us, but of mortgaging herself and her resources to our enemies, the whole contest is changed : and the question is how far Great Britain may, by every means in her power, destroy or render useless a connection contrived for her ruin, and the aggrandizement of France. Under such circumstances, the laws of

self-preservation must direct the conduct of Britain, and if the British colonies are to become an accession to France, will direct her to render that accession of as little avail as possible to her enemy."

I consider you in this declaration, like madmen biting in the hour of death. It contains likewise a fraudulent meanness; for, in order to justify a barbarous conclusion, you have advanced a false position. The treaty we have formed with France is open, noble, and generous. It is true policy, founded on sound philosophy, and neither a surrender or mortgage, as you would scandalously insinuate. I have seen every article, and speak from positive knowledge. In France, we have found an affectionate friend and faithful ally; in Britain, we have found nothing but tyranny, cruelty, and infidelity.

But the happiness is, that the mischief you threaten is not in your power to execute; and if it were, the punishment would return upon you in a ten-fold degree. The humanity of America hath hitherto restrained her from acts of retaliation, and the affection she retains for many individuals in England, who have fed, clothed and comforted her prisoners, has, to the present day, warded off her resentment, and operated as a screen to the whole. But even these considerations must cease, when national objects interfere and oppose them. Repeated aggravations will provoke a retort, and policy justify the measure. We mean now to take you seriously up upon your own ground and principle, and as you do, so shall you be done by.

You ought to know, gentlemen, that England and Scotland, are far more exposed to incendiary desolation than America, in her present state, can possibly be. We occupy a country, with but few towns, and whose riches consist in land and annual produce. The two last can suffer but little, and that only within a very limited compass. In Britain it is otherwise. Her wealth lies

chiefly in cities and large towns, the depositories of manufactures and fleets of merchantmen.—There is not a nobleman's country seat but may be laid in ashes by a single person. Your own may probably contribute to the proof: in short, there is no evil which cannot be returned when you come to incendiary mischief.—The ships in the Thames, may certainly be as easily set on fire, as the temporary bridge was a few years ago; yet of that affair no discovery was ever made; and the loss you would sustain by such an event, executed at a proper season, is infinitely greater than any you can inflict. The East India house, and the bank, neither are, nor can be secure from this sort of destruction, and, as Dr. Price justly observes, a fire at the latter would bankrupt the nation. It has never been the custom of France and England when at war, to make those havocs on each other, because the ease with which they could retaliate rendered it as impolitic as if each had destroyed his own.

But think not, gentlemen, that our distance secures you, or our invention fails us. We can much easier accomplish such a point than any nation in Europe. We talk the same language, dress in the same habit, and appear with the same manners as yourselves. We can pass from one part of England to another unsuspected; many of us are as well acquainted with the country as you are, and should you impoliticly provoke us, you will most assuredly lament the effects of it. Mischiefs of this kind require no army to execute them. The means are obvious, and the opportunities unguardable. I hold up a warning to your senses, if you have any left, and "to the unhappy people likewise, whose affairs are committed to you."* I call not with the rancor of an enemy, but the earnestness of a friend, on the deluded people of England, lest, between your blunders and theirs, they sink beneath the evils contrived for us.

* General Clinton's letter to Congress.

"He who lives in a glass house," says a Spanish proverb, "should never begin throwing stones." This, gentlemen, is exactly your case, and you must be the most ignorant of mankind, or suppose us so, not to see on which side the balance of accounts will fall. There are many other modes of retaliation, which, for several reasons, I choose not to mention. But be assured of this, that the instant you put your threat in execution, a counter-blow will follow it. If you openly profess yourselves savages, it is high time we should treat you as such, and if nothing but distress can recover you to reason, to punish will become an office of charity.

While your fleet lay last winter in the Delaware, I offered my service to the Pennsylvania navy-board then at Trenton, as one who would make a party with them, or any four or five gentlemen, on an expedition down the river to set fire to it, and though it was not then accepted, nor the thing personally attempted, it is more than probable that your own folly will provoke a much more ruinous act. Say not when the mischief is done, that you had not warning, and remember that we do not begin it, but mean to repay it. Thus much for your savage and impolitic threat.

In another part of your proclamation you say, "But if the honors of a military life are become the object of the Americans, let them seek those honors under the banners of their rightful sovereign, and in fighting the battles of the united British empire, against our late mutual and natural enemies." Surely! the union of absurdity with madness was never marked in more distinguishable lines than these. Your rightful sovereign, as you call him, may do well enough for you, who dare not inquire into the humble capacities of the man; but we, who estimate persons and things by their real worth, cannot suffer our judgments to be so imposed upon; and, unless it is your wish to see him exposed, it ought to be your endeavor to

keep him out of sight. The less you have to say about him the better. We have done with him, and that ought to be answer enough. You have been often told so. Strange! that the answer must be so often repeated. You go a begging with your king as with a brat, or with some unsalable commodity you were tired of; and though every body tells you "no, no," still you keep hawking him about. But there is one that will have him in a little time, and as we have no inclination to disappoint you of a customer, we bid nothing for him.

The impertinent folly of the paragraph that I have just quoted, deserves no other notice than to be laughed at and thrown by, but the principle on which it is founded is detestable. We are invited to submit to a man who has attempted by every cruelty to destroy us, and to join him in making war against France, who is already at war against him for our support.

Can Bedlam, in concert with Lucifer, form a more mad and devilish request? Were it posssible a people could sink into such apostacy they would deserve to be swept from the earth like the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. The proposition is an universal affront to the rank which man holds in the creation, and an indignity to him who placed him there. It supposes him made up without a spark of honor, and under no obligation to God or man.

What sort of men or Christians must you suppose the Americans to be, who, after seeing their most humble petitions insultingly rejected—the most grievous laws passed to distress them in every quarter—an undeclared war let loose upon them, and Indians and Negroes invited to the slaughter—who, after seeing their kinsmen murdered, their fellow citizens starved to death in prisons, and their houses and property destroyed and burned,—who, after the most serious appeals to heaven—the most solemn abjuration by oath of all government connected

with you, and the most heart-felt pledges and protestation of faith to each other—and who, after soliciting the friendship, and entering into alliances with other nations, should at last break through all these obligations, civil and divine, by complying with your horrid and infernal proposal? Ought we ever after to be considered as a part of the human race? or, ought we not rather to be blotted from the society of mankind, and become a spectacle of misery to the world? But there is something in corruption, which, like a jaundiced eye, transfers the color of itself to the object it looks upon, and sees every thing stained and impure; for unless you were capable of such conduct yourselves, you could never have supposed such a character in us. The offer fixes your infamy. It exhibits you as a nation without faith; with whom oaths and treaties are considered as trifles, and the breaking them as the breaking of a bubble. Regard to decency, or to rank, might have taught you better; or pride inspired you, though virtue could not. There is not left a step in the degradation of character to which you can now descend; you have put your foot on the ground floor, and the key of the dungeon is turned upon you.

That the invitation may want nothing of being a complete monster, you have thought proper to finish it with an assertion which has no foundation, either in fact or philosophy; and as Mr. Ferguson, your secretary, is a man of letters, and has made civil society his study, and published a treatise on that subject, I address this part to him.

In the close of the paragraph last quoted, France is styled the "natural enemy" of England, and by way of lugging us into some strange idea, she is styled "the late mutual and natural enemy" of both countries. I deny that she ever was the natural enemy of either; and that there does not exist in nature such a principle. The expression is an unmeaning barbarism, and wholly unphilosophical, when applied to beings of the same

species, let their station in the creation be what it may. We have a perfect idea of a natural enemy when we think of the devil, because the enmity is perpetual, unalterable, and unabatable. It admits neither of peace, truce, or treaty; consequently the warfare is eternal, and therefore it is natural. But man with man cannot arrange in the same opposition. Their quarrels are accidental and equivocally created. They become friends or enemies as the change of temper, or the cast of interest inclines them. The Creator of man did not constitute them the natural enemy of each other. He has not made any one order of beings so. Even wolves may quarrel, still they herd together. If any two nations are so, then must all nations be so, otherwise it is not nature but custom, and the offence frequently originates with the accuser. England is as truly the natural enemy of France, as France is of England, and perhaps more so. Separated from the rest of Europe, she has contracted an unsocial habit of manners, and imagines in others the jealousy she creates in herself. Never long satisfied with peace, she supposes the discontent universal, and buoyed up with her own importance, conceives herself the only object pointed at. The expression has been often used, and always with a fraudulent design; for when the idea of a natural enemy is conceived, it prevents all other enquiries, and the real cause of the quarrel is hidden in the universality of the conceit. Men start at the notion of a natural enemy, and ask no other question. The cry obtains credit like the alarm of a mad dog, and is one of those kind of tricks, which, by operating on the common passions, secures their interest through their folly.

But we, sir, are not to be thus imposed upon. We live in a large world, and have extended our ideas beyond the limits and prejudices of an island. We hold out the right hand of friendship to all the universe, and

we conceive that there is a sociality in the manners of France, which is much better disposed to peace and negotiation than that of England, and until the latter becomes more civilized, she cannot expect to live long at peace with any power. Her common language is vulgar and offensive, and children with their milk suck in the rudiments of insult—"The arm of Britain! The mighty arm of Britain! Britain that shakes the earth to its centre and its poles! The scourge of France! The terror of the world! That governs with a nod, and pours down vengeance like a God." This language neither makes a nation great or little; but it shows a savageness of manners, and has a tendency to keep national animosity alive. The entertainments of the stage are calculated to the same end, and almost every public exhibition is tinctured with insult. Yet England is always in dread of France. Terrified at the apprehension of an invasion. Suspicious of being outwitted in a treaty, and privately cringing, though she is publicly offending. Let her therefore, reform her manners and do justice, and she will find the idea of a natural enemy to be only a phantom of her own imagination.

Little did I think, at this period of the war, to see a proclamation which could promise you no one useful purpose whatever, and tend only to expose you. One would think you were just awakened from a four years' dream, and knew nothing of what had passed in the interval. Is this a time to be offering pardons, or renewing the long forgotten subjects of charters and taxation? Is it worth your while, after every force has failed you, to retreat under the shelter of argument and persuasion? Or can you think that we, with nearly half your army prisoners, and in alliance with France, are to be begged or threatened into submission by a piece of paper? But as commissioners, each at a hundred pounds sterling a week, you conceive yourselves bound to do something,

and the genius of ill fortune told you, you must write. For my own part, I have not put pen to paper these several months. Convinced of our superiority by the issue of every campaign, I was inclined to hope, that that which all the rest of the world now see, would become visible to you, and therefore felt unwilling to ruffle your temper by fretting you with repetitions and discoveries. There have been intervals of hesitation in your conduct, from which it seemed a pity to disturb you, and a charity to leave you to yourselves. You have often stopped, as if you intended to think, but your thoughts have ever been too early or too late.

There was a time when Britain disdained to answer, or even hear a petition from America. That time is past, and she in her turn is petitioning our acceptance. We now stand on higher ground, and offer her peace; and the time will come when she, perhaps in vain, will ask it from us. The latter case is as probable as the former ever was. She cannot refuse to acknowledge our independence with greater obstinacy than she before refused to repeal her laws; and if America alone could bring her to the one, united with France she will reduce her to the other. There is something in obstinacy which differs from every other passion. Whenever it fails it never recovers, but either breaks like iron, or crumbles sulkily away like a fractured arch. Most other passions have their periods of fatigue and rest—their suffering and their cure; but obstinacy has no resource, and the first wound is mortal. You have already begun to give it up, and you will, from the natural construction of the vice, find yourselves both obliged and inclined to do so.

If you look back you see nothing but loss and disgrace. If you look forward the same scene continues, and the close is an impenetrable gloom. You may plan and execute little mischiefs, but are they worth the expense they cost you, or will such partial evils have any

effect on the general cause? Your expedition to Egg Harbor, will be felt at a distance like an attack upon a hen-roost, and expose you in Europe, with a sort of childish frenzy. Is it worth while to keep an army to protect you in writing proclamations, or to get once a year into winter-quarters? Possessing yourselves of towns is not conquest, but convenience, and in which you will one day or other be trepanned. Your retreat from Philadelphia, was only a timely escape, and your next expedition may be less fortunate.

It would puzzle all the politicians in the universe to conceive what you stay for, or why you should have staid so long. You are prosecuting a war in which you confess you have neither object nor hope, and that conquest, could it be effected, would not repay the charges. In the meanwhile, the rest of your affairs are running into ruin, and a European war kindling against you. In such a situation, there is neither doubt or difficulty; the first rudiments of reason will determine the choice, for if peace can be procured with more advantages than even a conquest can be obtained, he must be an idiot indeed that hesitates.

But you are probably buoyed up by a set of wretched mortals, who, having deceived themselves, are cringing with the duplicity of a spaniel for a little temporary bread. Those men will tell you just what you please. It is their interest to amuse, in order to lengthen out their protection. They study to keep you amongst them for that very purpose; and in proportion as you disregard their advice, and grow callous to their complaints, they will stretch into improbability, and season their flattery the higher. Characters like these, are to be found in every country, and every country will despise them.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, Oct. 20, 1778.

THE CRISIS.

NUMBER VII.

TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

THERE are stages in the business of serious life in which to amuse is cruel, but to deceive is to destroy; and it is of little consequence, in the conclusion, whether men deceive themselves, or submit, by a kind of mutual consent, to the impositions of each other. That England has long been under the influence of delusion or mistake, needs no other proof than the unexpected and wretched situation she is now involved in; and so powerful has been the influence, that no provision was ever made or thought of against the misfortune, because the possibility of its happening was never conceived.

The general and succesful resistance of America, the conquest of Burgoyne, and a war in France, were treated in parliament as the dreams of a discontented opposition, or a distempered imagination. They were beheld as objects unworthy of a serious thought, and the bare intimation of them afforded the ministry a triumph of laughter. Short triumph indeed! For every thing which has been predicted has happened, and all that was promised has failed. A long series of politics so remarkably distinguished by a succession of misfortunes, without one alleviating turn, must certainly have something in it systematically wrong. It is sufficient to awaken the most credulous into suspicion, and the most obstinate into thought. Either the means in your power are in-

sufficient, or the measures ill planned; either the execution has been bad, or the thing attempted impracticable; or, to speak more emphatically, either you are not able, or heaven is not willing. For, why is it that you have not conquered us? Who, or what has prevented you? You have had every opportunity that you could desire, and succeeded to your utmost wish in every preparatory means. Your fleets and armies have arrived in America without an accident. No uncommon misfortune hath intervened. No foreign nation hath interfered until the time which you had allotted for victory was past. The opposition, either in or out of parliament, neither disconcerted your measures, retarded or diminished your force. They only foretold your fate. Every ministerial scheme was carried with as high a hand as if the whole nation had been unanimous. Every thing wanted was asked for, and every thing asked for was granted.

A greater force was not within the compass of your abilities to send, and the time you sent it was of all others the most favorable. You were then at rest with the whole world beside. You had the range of every court in Europe uncontradicted by us. You amused us with a tale of commissioners of peace, and under that disguise collected a numerous army and came almost unexpectedly upon us. The force was much greater than we looked for; and that which we had to oppose it with was unequal in numbers, badly armed, and poorly disciplined; beside which, it was embodied only for a short time, and expired within a few months after your arrival. We had governments to form; measures to concert; an army to raise and train, and every necessary article to import or to create. Our non-importation scheme had exhausted our stores, and your command by sea intercepted our supplies. We were a people unknown, and unconnected with the political world, and strangers to the disposition of foreign powers. Could you possibly

wish for a more favorable conjunction of circumstances? Yet all these have happened and passed away, and, as it were, left you with a laugh. They are likewise events of such an original nativity as can never happen again, unless a new world should arise from the ocean.

If any thing can be a lesson to presumption, surely the circumstances of this war will have their effect. Had Britain been defeated by any European power, her pride would have drawn consolation from the importance of her conquerors; but in the present case, she is excelled by those she affected to despise, and her own opinions retorting upon herself, become an aggravation of her disgrace. Misfortune and experience are lost upon mankind, when they produce neither reflection nor reformation. Evils, like poisons, have their uses, and there are diseases which no other remedy can reach. It has been the crime and folly of England to suppose herself invincible, and that, without acknowledging or perceiving that a full third of her strength was drawn from the country she is now at war with. The arm of Britain has been spoken of as the arm of the Almighty, and she has lived of late as if she thought the whole world was created for her diversion. Her politics, instead of civilizing, has tended to brutalize mankind, and under the vain, unmeaning title of "Defender of the Faith," she has made war like an Indian against the religion of humanity. Her cruelties in the East Indies will *never* be forgotten; and it is somewhat remarkable that the produce of that ruined country, transported to America, should there kindle up a war to punish the destroyer. The chain in continued, though with a kind of mysterious uniformity both in the crime and the punishment. The latter runs parallel with the former, and time and fate will give it a perfect illustration.

Where information is withheld, ignorance becomes a reasonable excuse: and one would charitably hope that

the people of England do not encourage cruelty from choice but from mistake. Their recluse situation, surrounded by the sea, preserves them from the calamities of war, and keeps them in the dark as to the conduct of their own armies. They see not, therefore they feel not. They tell the tale that is told them and believe it, and accustomed to no other news than their own, they receive it, stripped of its horrors and prepared for the palate of the nation, through the channel of the *London Gazette*. They are made to believe that their generals and armies differ from those of other nations, and have nothing of rudeness or barbarity in them. They suppose them what they wish them to be. They feel a disgrace in thinking otherwise, and naturally encourage the belief from a partiality to themselves. There was a time when I felt the same prejudices, and reasoned from the same errors; but experience, sad and painful experience, has thought me better. What the conduct of former armies was, I know not, but what the conduct of the present is, I well know. It is low, cruel, indolent and profligate; and had the people of America no other cause for separation than what the army has occasioned, that alone is cause sufficient.

The field of politics in England is far more extensive than that of news. Men have a right to reason for themselves, and though they cannot contradict the intelligence in the *London Gazette*, they may frame upon it what sentiments they please. But the misfortune is, that a general ignorance has prevailed over the whole nation respecting America. The ministry and minority have both been wrong. The former was always so; the latter only lately so. Politics, to be executively right, must have a unity of means and time, and a defect in either overthrows the whole. The ministry rejected the plans of the minority while they were practicable, and joined in them when they became impracticable. From

wrong measures they got into wrong time, and have now completed the circle of absurdity by closing it upon themselves.

It was my fate to come to America a few months before the breaking out of hostilities. I found the disposition of the people such, that they might have been led by a thread and governed by a reed. Their suspicion was quick and penetrating, but their attachment to Britain was obstinate, and it was at that time a kind of treason to speak against it. They disliked the ministry, but they esteemed the nation. Their idea of grievance operated without resentment, and their single object was reconciliation. Bad as I believed the ministry to be, I never conceived them capable of a measure so rash and wicked as the commencing of hostilities; much less did I imagine the nation would encourage it. I viewed the dispute as a kind of law-suit, in which I supposed the parties would find a way either to decide or settle it. I had no thoughts of independence or of arms. The world could not then have persuaded me that I should be either a soldier or an author. If I had any talents for either, they were buried in me, and might ever have continued so, had not the necessity of the times dragged and driven them into action. I had formed my plan of life, and conceiving myself happy, wished every body else so. But when the country, into which I had just put my foot, was set on fire about my ears, it was time to stir. It was time for every man to stir. Those who had been long settled had something to defend; those who had just come had something to pursue; and the call and the concern was equal and universal. For in a country where all men were once adventurers, the difference of a few years in their arrival could make none in their right.

The breaking out of hostilities opened a new suspicion in the politics of America, which though at that time

very rare, has been since proved to be very right. What I allude to is, "a secret and fixed determination in the British cabinet to annex America to the crown of England as a conquered country." If this be taken as the object, then the whole line of conduct pursued by the ministry, though rash in its origin and ruinous in its consequences, is nevertheless uniform and consistent in its parts. It applies to every case and resolves every difficulty. But if taxation or any thing else be taken in its room, then is there no proportion between the object and the charge. Nothing but the whole soil and property of the country can be placed as a possible equivalent against the millions which the ministry expended. No taxes raised in America could possibly repay it. A revenue of two millions sterling a year would not discharge the sum and interest accumulated thereon in twenty years.

Reconciliation never appears to have been the wish or the object of the administration. They looked on conquest as certain and infallible, and under that persuasion sought to drive the Americans into what they might style a general rebellion, and then, crushing them with arms in their hands, reap the rich harvest of a general confiscation, and silence them for ever. The dependants at court were too numerous to be provided for in England. The market for plunder in the East Indies was over; and the profligacy of government required that a new mine should be opened, and that mine could be no other than America conquered and forfeited. They had no where else to go. Every other channel was drained; and extravagance, with the thrift of a drunkard, was gaping for supplies.

If the ministry deny this to have been their plan, it becomes them to explain what was their plan. For either they have abused us in coveting property they never labored for, or they have abused you in expending

an amazing sum upon an incompetent object. Taxation, as I mentioned before, could never be worth the charge of obtaining it by arms; and any kind of formal obedience which America could have made, would have weighed with the lightness of a laugh against such a load of expense. It is therefore most probable, that the ministry will at last justify their policy by their dishonesty, and openly declare, that their original design was conquest: and in this case, it well becomes the people of England to consider how far the nation would have been benefited by the success.

In a general view, there are few conquests that repay the charge of making them, and mankind are pretty well convinced that it can never be worth their while to go to war for profit's sake. If they are made war upon, their country invaded, or their existence at stake, it is their duty to defend and preserve themselves, but in every other light, and from every other cause, is war inglorious and detestable. But to return to the case in question—

When conquests are made of foreign countries, it is supposed that the *commerce* and *dominion* of the country which made them are extended. But this could neither be the object nor the consequence of the present war. You enjoyed the whole commerce before. It could receive no possible addition by a conquest, but on the contrary, must diminish as the inhabitants were reduced in numbers and wealth. You had the same *dominion* over the country which you used to have, and had no complaint to make against her for breach of any part of the contract between you or her, or contending against any established custom, commercial, political or territorial. The country and commerce were both your own when you *began* to conquer, in the same manner and form as they had been your own an hundred years before. Nations have sometimes been induced to make conquests for the sake of reducing the power of their

enemies, or bringing it to a balance with their own. But this could be no part of your plan. No foreign authority was claimed here, neither was any such authority suspected by you, or acknowledged or imagined by us. What then, in the name of heaven, could you go to war for? or what chance could you possibly have in the event, but either to hold the same country which you held before, and that in a much worse condition, or to lose, with an amazing expense, what you might have retained without a farthing of charges.

War never can be the interest of a trading nation, any more than quarreling can be profitable to a man in business. But to make war with those who trade with us, is like setting a bull dog upon a customer at the shop-door. The least degree of common sense shows the madness of the latter, and it will apply with the same force of conviction to the former. Piratical nations, having neither commerce or commodities of their own to lose, may make war upon all the world, and lucratively find their account in it; but it is quite otherwise with Britain: for, besides the stoppage of trade in time of war, she exposes more of her own property to be lost, than she has the chance of taking from others. Some ministerial gentlemen in parliament have mentioned the greatness of her trade as an apology for the greatness of her loss. This is miserable politics indeed! because it ought to have been given as a reason for her not engaging in a war at first. The coast of America commands the West India trade almost as effectually as the coast of Africa does that of the Straits; and England can no more carry on the former without the consent of America, than she can the latter without a Mediterranean pass.

In whatever light the war with America is considered upon commercial principles, it is evidently the interest of the people of England not to support it; and why it has been supported so long, against the clearest demon-

strations of truth and national advantage, is to me, and must be to all the reasonable world, a matter of astonishment. Perhaps it may be said that I live in America, and write this from interest. To this I reply, that my principles are universal. My attachment is to all the world, and not to any particular part, and if what I advance is right, then no matter where or who it comes from.

We have given the proclamation of your commissioners a currency in our newspapers, and I have no doubt you will give this a place in yours. To oblige and be obliged is fair.

Before I dismiss this part of my address, I shall mention one more circumstance in which I think the people of England have been equally mistaken: and then proceed to other matters.

There is such an idea existing in the world, as that of *national honor*, and this falsely understood, is oftentimes the cause of war. In a Christian and philosophical sense, mankind seem to have stood still at individual civilization, and to retain as nations all the original rudeness of nature. Peace by treaty is only a cessation of violence for a reformation of sentiment. It is a substitute for a principle that is wanting and ever will be wanting till the idea of *national honor* be rightly understood. As individuals we profess ourselves Christians, but as nations we are heathens, Romans, and what not. I remember the late Admiral Saunders declaring in the house of commons, and that in a time of peace, "That the city of Madrid laid in ashes was not a sufficient atonement for the Spaniards taking off the rudder of an English sloop of war." I do not ask whether this is Christianity or morality, I ask whether it is decency? whether it is proper language for a nation to use? In private life we call it by the plain name of bullying, and the elevation of rank cannot alter its character. It is, I think, exceedingly easy to define what ought to be under-

stood by national honor; for that which is the best character for an individual is the best character for a nation; and wherever the latter exceeds or falls beneath the former, there is a departure from the line of true greatness.

I have thrown out this observation with a design of applying it to Great Britain. Her ideas of national honor, seem devoid of that benevolence of heart, that universal expansion of philanthropy, and that triumph over the rage of vulgar prejudice, without which man is inferior to himself, and a companion of common animals. To know whom she shall regard or dislike, she asks what country they are of, what religion they profess, and what property they enjoy. Her idea of national honor seems to consist in national insult, and that to be a great people, is to be neither a Christian, a philosopher, or a gentleman, but to threaten with the rudeness of a bear, and to devour with the ferocity of a lion. This perhaps may sound harsh and uncourtly, but it is too true, and the more is the pity.

I mention this only as her general character. But towards America she has observed no character at all; and destroyed by her conduct what she assumed in her title. She set out with the title of parent, or mother country. The association of ideas which naturally accompany this expression, are filled with every thing that is fond, tender and forbearing. They have an energy peculiar to themselves, and, overlooking the accidental attachment of common affections, apply with infinite softness to the first feelings of the heart. It is a political term which every mother can feel the force of, and every child can judge of. It needs no painting of mine to set it off, for nature only can do it justice.

But has any part of your conduct to America corresponded with the title you set up? If in your general national character you are unpolished and severe, in this you are inconsistent and unnatural, and you must have

exceedingly false notions of national honor, to suppose that the world can admire a want of humanity, or that national honor depends on the violence of resentment, the inflexibility of temper, or the vengeance of execution.

I would willingly convince you, and that with as much temper as the times will suffer me to do, that as you opposed your own interest by quarreling with us, so likewise your national honor, rightly conceived and understood, was no ways called upon to enter into a war with America. Had you studied true greatness of heart, the first and fairest ornament of mankind, you would have acted directly contrary to all that you have done, and the world would have ascribed it to a generous cause; besides which, you had (though with the assistance of this country) secured a powerful name by the last war. You were known and dreaded abroad; and it would have been wise in you to have suffered the world to have slept undisturbed under that idea. It was to you a force existing without expense. It produced to you all the advantages of real power; and you were stronger through the universality of that charm, than any future fleets and armies may probably make you. Your greatness was so secured and interwoven with your silence, that you ought never to have awakened mankind, and had nothing to do but to be quiet. Had you been true politicians you would have seen all this, and continued to draw from the magic of a name, the force and authority of a nation.

Unwise as you were in breaking the charm, you were still more unwise in the manner of doing it. Sampson only told the secret, but you have performed the operation; you have shaven your own head, and wantonly thrown away the locks. America was the hair from which the charm was drawn that infatuated the world. You ought to have quarreled with no power; but with her upon no account. You had nothing to fear from

any condescension you might make. You might have humored her, even if there had been no justice in her claims, without any risk to your reputation; for Europe, fascinated by your fame, would have ascribed it to your benevolence, and America, intoxicated by the grant, would have slumbered in her fetters.

But this method of studying the progress of the passions, in order to ascertain the probable conduct of mankind, is a philosophy in politics which those who preside at St. James's have no conception of. They know no other influence than corruption, and reckon all their probabilities from precedent. A new case is to them a new world, and while they are seeking for a parallel they get lost. The talents of Lord Mansfield can be estimated at best no higher than those of a sophist. He understands the subtleties but not the elegance of nature; and by continually viewing mankind through the cold medium of the law, never thinks of penetrating into the warmer region of the mind. As for Lord North, it is his happiness to have in him more philosophy than sentiment, for he bears flogging like a top, and sleeps the better for it. His punishment becomes his support, for while he suffers the lash for his sins, he keeps himself up by twirling about. In politics, he is a good arithmetician, and in every thing else nothing at all.

There is one circumstance which comes so much within Lord North's province as a financier, that I am surprised it should escape him. which is, the different abilities of the two countries in supporting the expense; for, strange as it may seem, England is not a match for America in this particular. By a curious kind of revolution in accounts, the people of England seem to mistake their poverty for their riches; that is, they reckon their national debt as a part of their national wealth. They make the same kind of error which a man would do, who after mortgaging his estate, should add the money

borrowed, to the full value of the estate, in order to count up his worth, and in this case he would conceive that he got rich by running into debt. Just thus it is with England. The government owed at the beginning of this war one hundred and thirty-five millions sterling, and though the individuals to whom it was due, had a right to reckon their shares as so much private property, yet to the nation collectively it was so much poverty. There is as effectual limits to public debts as to private ones, for when once the money borrowed is so great as to require the whole yearly revenue to discharge the interest thereon, there is an end to further borrowing; in the same manner as when the interest of a man's debts amounts to the yearly income of his estate, there is an end to his credit. This is nearly the case with England, the interest of her present debt being at least equal to one-half of her yearly revenue, so that out of ten millions annually collected by taxes, she has but five that she can call her own.

The very reverse of this was the case with America; she began the war without any debt upon her, and in order to carry it on, she neither raised money by taxes, nor borrowed it upon interest, but created it; and her situation at this time continues so much the reverse of yours that taxing would make her rich, whereas it would make you poor. When we shall have sunk the sum which we have created, we shall then be out of debt, be just as rich as when we began, and all the while we are doing it shall feel no difference, because the value will rise as the quantity decreases.

There was not a country in the world so capable of bearing the expense of a war as America; not only because she was not in debt when she began, but because the country is young and capable of infinite improvement, and has an almost boundless tract of new lands in store; whereas England has got to her extent of age

and growth, and has no unoccupied land or property in reserve. The one is like a young heir coming to a large improvable estate; the other like an old man whose chances are over, and his estate mortgaged for half its worth.

In the second number of the *Crisis*, which I find has been republished in England, I endeavored to set forth the impracticability of conquering America. I stated every case that I conceived could possibly happen, and ventured to predict its consequences. As my conclusions were drawn not artfully, but naturally, they have all proved to be true. I was upon the spot; knew the politics of America, her strength and resources, and by a train of services, the best in my power to render, was honored with the friendship of the Congress, the army and the people. I considered the cause a just one. I know and feel it a just one, and under that confidence never made my own profit or loss an object. My endeavor was to have the matter well understood on both sides, and I conceived myself tendering a general service, by setting forth to the one the impossibility of being conquered, and to the other the impossibility of conquering. Most of the arguments made use of by the ministry for supporting the war, are the very arguments that ought to have been used against supporting it; and the plans by which they thought to conquer, are the very plans in which they were sure to be defeated. They have taken every thing up at the wrong end. Their ignorance is astonishing, and were you in my situation you would see it. They may, perhaps, have your confidence, but I am persuaded that they would make very indifferent members of Congress. I know what England is, and what America is, and from the compound of knowledge, am better enabled to judge of the issue than what the king or any of his ministers can be.

In this number I have endeavored to show the ill

policy and disadvantages of the war. I believe many of my remarks are new. Those which are not so, I have studied to improve and place in a manner that may be clear and striking. Your failure is, I am persuaded, as certain as fate. America is above your reach. She is at least your equal in the world, and her independence neither rests upon your consent, nor can it be prevented by your arms. In short, you spend your substance in vain, and impoverish yourselves without a hope.

But suppose you had conquered America, what advantages, collectively or individually, as merchants, manufacturers, or conquerors, could you have looked for? This is an object you seemed never to have attended to. Listening for the sound of victory, and led away by the frenzy of arms, you neglected to reckon either the cost or the consequences. You must all pay towards the expense; the poorest among you must bear his share, and it is both your right and your duty to weigh seriously the matter. Had America been conquered, she might have been parceled out in grants to the favorites at court, but no share of it would have fallen to you. Your taxes would not have been lessened, because she would have been in no condition to have paid any towards your relief. We are rich by a contrivance of our own, which would have ceased as soon as you became masters. Our paper money will be of no use in England, and silver and gold we have none. In the last war you made many conquests, but were any of your taxes lessened thereby? On the contrary, were you not taxed to pay for the charge of making them, and have not the same been the case in every war?

To the parliament I wish to address myself in a more particular manner. They appear to have supposed themselves partners in the chase, and to have hunted with the lion from an expectation of a right in the booty; but in this it is most probable they would, as legislators,

have been disappointed. The case is quite a new one, and many unforeseen difficulties would have arisen thereon. The parliament claimed a legislative right over America, and the war originated from that pretence. But the army is supposed to belong to the crown, and if America had been conquered through their means, the claim of the legislature would have been suffocated in the conquest. Ceded or conquered countries are supposed to be out of the authority of parliament. Taxation is exercised over them by prerogative and not by law. It was attempted to be done in the Grenadas a few years ago, and the only reason why it was not done was because the crown had made a prior relinquishment of its claim. Therefore, parliament have been all this while supporting measures for the esablishment of their authority, in the issue of which, they would have been triumphed over by the prerogative. This might have opened a new and interesting opposition between the parliament and the crown. The crown would have said that it conquered for itself, and that to conquer for parliament was an unknown case. The parliament might have replied, that America not being a foreign country, but a country in rebellion, could not be said to be conquered, but reduced; and thus continued their claim by disowning the term. The crown might have rejoined, that however America might be considered at first, she became foreign at last by a declaration of independence, and a treaty with France; and that her case being, by that treaty, put within the law of nations, was out of the law of parliament. The parliament might have maintained, that as their claim over America had never been surrendered, so neither could it be taken away. The crown might have insisted, that though the claim of parliament could not be taken away, yet, being an inferior, it might be superseded; and that, whether the claim was withdrawn from the object, or the object taken from the claim, the

same separation ensued; and that America being subdued after a treaty with France, was to all intents and purposes a regal conquest, and of course the sole property of the king. The parliament, as the legal delegates of the people, might have contended against the term "inferior," and rested the case upon the antiquity of power, and this would have brought on a set of very interesting and rational questions.

First, What is the original fountain of power and honor in any country?

Secondly, Whether the prerogative does not belong to the people?

Thirdly, Whether there is any such thing as the English constitution?

Fourthly, Of what use is the crown to the people?

Fifthly, Whether he who invented a crown was not an enemy to mankind?

Sixthly, Whether it is not a shame for a man to spend a million a year and do no good for it, and whether the money might not be better applied?

Seventhly, Whether such a man is not better dead than alive?

Eighthly, Whether a congress, constituted like that of America, is not the most happy and consistent form of government in the world?—With a number of others of the same import.

In short, the contention about the dividend might have distracted the nation; for nothing is more common than to agree in the conquest and quarrel for the prize; therefore it is, perhaps, a happy circumstance, that our successes have prevented the dispute.

If the parliament had been thrown out in their claim, which it is most probable they would, the nation likewise would have been thrown out in their expectation; for as the taxes would have been laid on by the crown without the parliament, the revenue arising therefrom, if

any could have arisen, would not have gone into the exchequer, but into the privy purse, and so far from lessening the taxes, would not even have been added to them, but served only as pocket money to the crown. The more I reflect on this matter, the more I am astonished at the blindness and ill policy of my countrymen, whose wisdom seems to operate without discernment, and their strength without an object.

To the great bulwark of the nation, I mean the mercantile and manufacturing part thereof, I likewise present my address. It is your interest to see America an independent country, and not a conquered one. If conquered, she is ruined; and if ruined, poor; consequently her trade will be a trifle, and her credit doubtful. If independent, she flourishes, and from her flourishing must your profits arise. It matters nothing to you who governs America, if your manufactures find a consumption there. Some articles will consequently be obtained from other places, and right they should; but the demand of others will increase, by the great influx of inhabitants which a state of independence and peace will occasion, and in the final event you may be enriched. The commerce of America is perfectly free, and ever will be so. She will consign away no part of it to any nation. She has not to her friends, and certainly will not to her enemies, though it is probable that your narrow-minded politicians, thinking to please you thereby, may some time or other unnecessarily make such a proposal. Trade flourishes best when it is free, and it is weak policy to attempt to fetter it. Her treaty with France is on the most liberal and generous principles, and the French, in their conduct towards her, have proved themselves to be philosophers, politicians, and gentlemen.

To the ministry I likewise address myself. You, gentlemen, have studied the ruin of your country, from which it is not within your abilities to rescue her. Your

attempts to recover her are as ridiculous as your plans which involved her are detestable. The commissioners, being about to depart, will probably bring you this, and with it my sixth number, addressed to them; and in so doing they carry back more *Common Sense* than they brought, and you likewise will have more than when you sent them.

Having thus addressed you severally, I conclude by addressing you collectively. It is a long lane that has no turning. A period of sixteen years of misconduct and misfortune, is certainly long enough for any one nation to suffer under; and upon a supposition that war is not declared between France and you, I beg to place a line of conduct before you that will easily lead you out of all your troubles. It has been hinted before, and cannot be too much attended to.

Suppose America had remained unknown to Europe till the present year, and that Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander, in another voyage round the world, had made the first discovery of her, in the same condition that she is now in, of arts, arms, numbers, and civilization. What, I ask, in that case, would have been your conduct towards her? For *that* will point out what it ought to be now. The problems and their solutions are equal, and the right line of the one is the parallel of the other. The question takes in every circumstance that can possibly arise. It reduces politics to a simple thought, and is moreover a mode of investigation, in which, while you are studying your interest, the simplicity of the case will cheat you into good temper. You have nothing to do but to suppose that you have found America, and she appears found to your hand, and while in the joy of your heart you stand still to admire her, the path of politics rises straight before you.

Were I disposed to paint a contrast, I could easily set off what you have done in the present case, against what

you would have done in *that* case, and by justly opposing them, conclude a picture that would make you blush. But, as when any of the prouder passions are hurt, it is much better philosophy to let a man slip into a good temper than to attack him in a bad one; for that reason, therefore, I only state the case, and leave you to reflect upon it.

To go a little back into politics, it will be found that the true interest of Britain lay in proposing and promoting the independence of America immediately after the last peace; for the expense which Britain had then incurred by defending America as her own dominions, ought to have shown her the policy and necessity of changing the *style* of the country, as the best probable method of preventing future wars and expense, and the only method by which she could hold the commerce without the charge of sovereignty. Besides which, the title which she assumed, of parent country, led to, and pointed out the propriety, wisdom and advantage of a separation; for, as in private life, children grow into men, and by setting up for themselves, extend and secure the interest of the whole family, so in the settlement of colonies large enough to admit of maturity, the same policy should be pursued, and the same consequences would follow. Nothing hurts the affections both of parents and children so much, as living too closely connected, and keeping up the distinction too long. Domineering will not do over those, who, by a progress in life, have become equal in rank to their parents, that is, when they have families of their own; and though they may conceive themselves the subjects of their advice, will not suppose them the objects of their government. I do not, by drawing this parallel, mean to admit the title of *parent country*, because, if it is due any where, it is due to Europe collectively, and the first settlers from England were driven here by persecution. I mean only

to introduce the term for the sake of policy and to show from your title the line of your interest.

When you saw the state of strength and opulence, and that by her own industry, which America had arrived at, you ought to have advised her to set up for herself, and proposed an alliance of interest with her, and in so doing you would have drawn, and that at her own expense, more real advantage, and more military supplies and assistance, both of ships and men, than from any weak and wrangling government you could exercise over her. In short, had you studied only the domestic politics of a family, you would have learned how to govern the state; but, instead of this easy and natural line, you flew out into every thing which was wild and outrageous, till, by following the passion and stupidity of the pilot, you wrecked the vessel within sight of the shore.

Having shown what you ought to have done, I now proceed to show why it was not done. The caterpillar circle of the court, had an interest to pursue, distinct from, and opposed to yours; for though by the independence of America and an alliance therewith, the trade would have continued, if not increased, as in many articles neither country can go to a better market, and though, by defending and protecting herself, she would have been no expense to you, and consequently your national charges would have decreased, and your taxes might have been proportionably lessened thereby; yet the striking off so many places from the court calendar was put in opposition to the interest of the nation.

The loss of thirteen government ships, with their appendages here and in England, is a shocking sound in the ear of a hungry courtier. Your present king and ministry will be the ruin of you; and you had better risk a revolution and call a congress, than be thus led on from madness to despair, and from despair to ruin. America

has set you the example, and you may follow it and be free.

I now come to the last part, a war with France. This is what no man in his senses will advise you to, and all good men would wish to prevent. Whether France will declare war against you, is not for me in this place to mention, or to hint, even if I knew it; but it must be madness in you to do it first. The matter is come now to a full crisis, and peace is easy if willingly set about.

Whatever you may think, France has behaved handsomely to you. She would have been unjust to herself to have acted otherwise than she did; and having accepted our offer of alliance she gave you genteel notice of it. There was nothing in her conduct reserved or indelicate, and while she announced her determination to support her treaty, she left you to give the first offence.

America, on her part, has exhibited a character of firmness to the world. Unprepared and unarmed, without form or government, she singly opposed a nation that domineered over half the globe. The greatness of the deed demands respect; and although you may feel resentment, you are compelled both to wonder and admire.

Here I rest my arguments and finish my address. Such as it is, it is a gift, and you are welcome. It was always my design to dedicate a *Crisis* to you, when the time should come that would properly *make it a Crisis;* and when, likewise, I should catch myself in a temper to write it, and suppose you in a condition to read it. *That* time has now arrived, and with it the opportunity of conveyance. For the commissioners—*poor commissioners!* having proclaimed, that "*yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown*," have waited out the date, and, discontented with their God, are returning to their gourd.

And all the harm I wish them is, that it may not *wither* about their ears, and that they may not make their exit in the belly of a whale.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, Nov. 21, 1778.

P. S. Though in the tranquillity of my mind I have concluded with a laugh, yet I have something to mention to the *commissioners*, which, to them, is serious and worthy their attention. Their authority is derived from an act of parliament, which likewise describes and *limits* their *official* powers. Their commission, therefore, is only a recital, and personal investiture of those powers, or a nomination and description of the persons who are to execute them. Had it contained any thing contrary to, or gone beyond the line of the written law, from which it is derived, and by which it is bound, it would, by the English constitution, have been treason in the crown, and the king been subject to an impeachment. He dared not, therefore, put in his commission what you have put in your proclamation, that is, he dared not have authorized you in that commission to burn or destroy any thing in America. You are both in the *act* and in the *commission* styled *commissioners for restoring peace*, and the methods for doing it are there pointed out. Your last proclamation is signed by you as commissioners *under that act.* You make parliament the patron of its contents. Yet, in the body of it, you insert matters contrary both to the spirit and letter of the act, and what likewise your king dared not have put in his commission to you. The state of things in England, gentlemen, is too ticklish for you to run hazards. You are *accountable to parliament for the execution of that act according to the letter of it.* Your heads may pay for breaking it, for you certainly have broke it by

exceeding it. And as a friend, who would wish you to escape the paw of the lion, as well as the belly of the whale, I civilly hint to you, *to keep within compass.*

Sir Harry Clinton, strictly speaking, is as accountable as the rest; for though a general, he is likewise a commissioner, acting under a superior authority. His first obedience is due to the act; and his plea of being a general, will not and cannot clear him as a commissioner, for that would suppose the crown, in its single capacity, to have a power of dispensing with an act of parliament. Your situation, gentlemen, is nice and critical, and the more so because England is unsettled. Take heed! Remember the times of Charles the First! For Laud and Stafford fell by trusting to a hope like yours.

Having thus shown you the danger of your proclamation, I now show you the folly of it. The means contradict your design; you threaten to lay waste, in order to render America a useless acquisition of alliance to France. I reply, that the more destruction you commit (if you could do it) the more valuable to France you make that alliance. You can destroy only houses and goods; and by so doing you increase our demand upon her for materials and merchandise; for the wants of one nation, provided it has *freedom* and *credit*, naturally produces riches to the other; and, as you can neither ruin the land nor prevent the vegetation, you would increase the exportation of our produce in payment, which would be to her a fund of wealth. In short, had you cast about for a plan on purpose to enrich your enemies, you could not have hit upon a better.

C. S.

THE CRISIS.

NUMBER VIII.

ADDRESSED TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

"TRUSTING (says the king of England in his speech of November last,) in the divine providence, and in the justice of my cause, I am firmly resolved to prosecute the war with vigor, and to make every exertion in order to compel our enemies to equitable terms of peace and accommodation." To this declaration the United States of America, and the confederated powers of Europe will reply, *if Britain will have war, she shall have enough of it.*

Five years have nearly elapsed since the commencement of hostilities, and every campaign, by a gradual decay, has lessened your ability to conquer, without producing a serious thought on your condition or your fate. Like a prodigal lingering in an habitual consumption, you feel the relics of life, and mistake them for recovery. New schemes, like new medicines, have administered fresh hopes, and prolonged the disease instead of curing it. A change of generals, like a change of physicians, served only to keep the flattery alive, and furnish new pretences for new extravagance.

"*Can Britain fail?*"* has been proudly asked at the commencement of every enterprise, and that "*whatever she wills is fate,*"† has been given with the solemnity of

* Whitehead's New Year's Ode for 1776.

† Ode at the installation of Lord North, for Chancellor of the University of Oxford.

prophetic confidence, and though the question has been constantly replied to by disappointment, and the prediction falsified by misfortune, yet still the insult continued, and your catalogue of national evils increased therewith. Eager to persuade the world of her power, she considered destruction as the minister of greatness, and conceived that the glory of a nation like that of an Indian, lay in the number of its scalps and the miseries it inflicts.

Fire, sword and want, as far as the arms of Britain could extend them, have been spread with wanton cruelty along the coast of America ; and while you, remote from the scene of suffering, had nothing to lose and as little to dread, the information reached you like a tale of antiquity, in which the distance of time defaces the conception, and changes the severest sorrows into convertable amusement.

This makes the second paper, addressed perhaps in vain, to the people of England. That advice should be taken wherever example has failed, or precept be regarded where warning is ridiculed, is like a picture of hope resting on despair: but when time shall stamp with universal currency, the facts you have long encountered with a laugh, and the irresistible evidence of accumulated losses, like the hand-writing on the wall, shall add terror to distress, you will then, in a conflict of sufferings, learn to sympathise with others by feeling for yourselves.

The triumphant appearance of the combined fleets in the channel and at your harbor's mouth, and the expedition of Captain Paul Jones, on the western and eastern coasts of England and Scotland, will, by placing you in the condition of an endangered country, read to you a stronger lecture on the calamities of invasion, and bring to your minds a truer picture of promiscuous distress, than the most finished rhetoric can describe or the keenest imagination conceive.

Hitherto you have experienced the expenses, but

nothing of the miseries of war. Your disappointments have been accompanied with no immediate suffering, and your losses came to you only by intelligence. Like fire at a distance you heard not even the cry; you felt not the danger, you saw not the confusion. To you every thing has been foreign but the taxes to support it. You knew not what it was to be alarmed at midnight with an armed enemy in the streets. You were strangers to the distressing scene of a family in flight, and to the thousand restless cares and tender sorrows that incessantly arose. To see women and children wandering in the severity of winter, with the broken remains of a well furnished house, and seeking shelter in every crib and hut, were matters you had no conception of. You knew not what it was to stand by and see your goods chopped for fuel, and your beds ripped to pieces to make packages for plunder. The misery of others, like a tempestuous night, added to the pleasures of your own security. You even enjoyed the storm, by contemplating the difference of conditions, and that carried sorrow into the breasts of thousands, served but to heighten in you a species of tranquil pride.—Yet these are but the fainter sufferings of war, when compared with carnage and slaughter, the miseries of a military hospital, or a town in flames.

The people of America, by anticipating distress, had fortified their minds against every species you could inflict. They had resolved to abandon their homes, to resign them to destruction, and to seek new settlements rather than submit. Thus familiarized to misfortune, before it arrived, they bore their portion with the less regret: the justness of their cause was a continual source of consolation, and the hope of final victory, which never left them, served to lighten the load and sweeten the cup allotted them to drink.

But when their suffering shall become yours, and in-

vasion be transferred upon the invaders, you will have neither their extended wilderness to fly to, their cause to comfort you, nor their hopes to rest upon. Distress with them was sharpened by no self-reflection. They had not brought it on themselves. On the contrary, they had by every proceeding endeavored to avoid it, and had descended even below the mark of congressional character, to prevent a war. The national honor or the advantages of independence were matters, which at the commencement of the dispute, they had never studied, and it was only at the last moment that the measure was resolved on. Thus circumstanced, they naturally and conscientiously felt a dependance upon providence. They had a clear pretension to it, and had they failed therein, infidelity had gained a triumph.

But your condition is the reverse of theirs. Everything you suffer you have sought; nay, had you created mischiefs on purpose to inherit them, you could not have secured your title by a firmer deed. The world awakens with no pity at your complaints. You felt none for others; you deserve none for yourselves. Nature does not interest herself in cases like yours, but on the contrary turns from them with dislike and abandons them to punishment. You may now present memorials to what court you please, but so far as America is the object, none will listen. The policy of Europe and the propensity there is in every mind to curb insulting ambition, and bring cruelty to judgment, are unitedly against you; and where nature and interest reinforce each other, the compact is too intimate to be dissolved.

Make but the case of others your own, and your own theirs, and you will then have a clear idea of the whole. Had France acted towards her colonies as you have done, you would have branded her with every epithet of abhorrence; and had you like her, stepped in to succor a struggling people, all Europe must have echoed with your

own applause. But entangled in the passion of dispute, you see it not as you ought, and form opinions thereon which suit with no interest but your own. You wonder America does not rise in union with you to impose on herself a portion of your taxes and reduce herself to unconditional submission. You are amazed that the southern powers of Europe do not assist you in conquering a country which is afterwards to be turned against themselves ; and that the northern ones do not contribute to reinstate you in America, who already enjoy the market for naval stores by the separation. You seem surprised that Holland does not pour in her succors, to maintain you mistress of the seas, when her own commerce is suffering by your act of navigation, or that any country should study her own interests while yours is on the carpet.

Such excesses of passionate folly, and unjust as well as unwise resentment, have driven you on, like Pharoah, to unpitied miseries, and while the importance of the quarrel shall perpetuate your disgrace, the flag of America will carry it around the world. The natural feelings of every rational being will be against you, and wherever the story shall be told, you will have neither excuse nor consolation left. With an unsparing hand and an insatiable mind, you have desolated the world, to gain dominion and to lose it ; and while in a frenzy of avarice and ambition, the east and the west are doomed to tributary bondage, you rapidly earned destruction as the wages of a nation.

At the thoughts of a war at home every man amongst you ought to tremble. The prospect is far more dreadful there than in America. Here the party that was against the measures of the continent, were in general a kind of neutrals who added strength to neither army. There does not exist a being so devoid of sense and sentiment as to covet "*unconditional submission*," and therefore no

man in America could be with you in principle. Several might, from a cowardice of mind, *prefer* it to the hardships and dangers of *opposing* it; but the same disposition that gave them such a choice, unfitted them to act either for or against us. But England is rent into parties, with equal shares of resolution. The principle which produced the war divides the nation. Their animosities are in the highest state of fermentation, and both sides, by a call of the militia, are in arms. No human foresight can discern, no conclusion can be formed, what turn a war might take, if once set on foot by an invasion. She is not now in a fit position to make a common cause of her own affairs, and having no conquests to hope for abroad, and nothing but expenses arising at home, her everything is staked upon a defensive combat, and the further she goes the worse she is off.

There are situations a nation may be in, in which peace or war, abstracted from every other consideration, may be politically right or wrong. When nothing can be lost by a war, but what must be lost without it, war is then the policy of that country; and such was the situation of America at the commencement of hostilities: but when no security can be gained by a war, but what may be accomplished by a peace, the case becomes reversed, and such now is the situation of England.

That America is beyond the reach of conquest, is a fact which experience has shown and time confirmed, and this admitted, what, I ask, is now the object of contention? If there be any honor in pursuing self-destruction with inflexible passion—if national suicide be the perfection of national glory, you may, with all the pride of criminal happiness, expire unenvied and unrivalled.—But when the tumult of war shall cease, and the tempest of present passions be succeeded by calm reflection, or when those who, surviving its fury, shall inherit from you a legacy of debts and misfortunes, when the yearly revenue shall

scarcely be able to discharge the interest of the one, and no possible remedy be left for the other : ideas, far different from the present, will arise and embitter the remembrance of former follies. A mind disarmed of its rage, feels no pleasure in contemplating a frantic quarrel. Sickness of thought, the sure consequence of conduct like yours, leaves no ability for enjoyment, no relish for resentment ; and though, like a man in a fit, you feel not the injury of the struggle, nor distinguish between strength and disease, the weakness will nevertheless be proportioned to the violence, and the sense of pain increase with the recovery.

To what persons or to whose system of politics you owe your present state of wretchedness, is a matter of total indifference to America. They have contributed, however unwillingly, to set her above themselves, and she in the tranquillity of conquest resigns the enquiry. The case now is not so properly who began the war, as who continues it. That there are men in all countries to whom a state of war is a mine of wealth, is a fact never to be doubted. Characters like these naturally breed in the putrefaction of distempered times, and after fattening on the disease, they perish with it, or impregnated with the stench, retreat into obscurity.

But there are several erroneous notions to which you likewise owe a share of your misfortunes, and which if continued will only increase your trouble and your losses. An opinion hangs about the gentlemen of the minority, that America would relish measures under *their* administration, which she would not from the present cabinet. On this rock Lord Chatham would have split had he gained the helm, and several of his survivors are steering the same course. Such distinctions in the infancy of the argument had some degree of foundation, but they now serve no other purpose than to lengthen out a war, in which the limits of a dispute, being fixed by the fate of

arms, and guaranteed by treaties, are not to be changed or altered by trivial circumstances.

The ministry and many of the minority sacrifice their time in disputing on a question with which they have nothing to do, namely, whether America shall be independent or not? whereas the only question that can come under their determination is, whether they will accede to it or not? They confound a military question with a political one, and undertake to supply by a vote what they lost by a battle. Say, she shall not be independent, and it will signify as much as if they voted against a decree of fate, or say that she shall, and she will be no more independent than before. Questions which when determined cannot be executed, serve only to show the folly of dispute and the weakness of disputants.

From a long habit of calling America your own, you suppose her governed by the same prejudices and conceits which govern yourself. Because you have set up a particular denomination of religion to the exclusion of all others, you imagine she must do the same, and because you, with an unsociable narrowness of mind, have cherished enmity against France and Spain, you suppose her alliance must be defective in friendship. Copying her notions of the world from you, she formerly thought as you instructed, but now feeling herself free, and the prejudice removed, she thinks and acts upon a different system. It frequently happens that in proportion as we are taught to dislike persons and countries, not knowing why, we feel an ardor of esteem upon the removal of the mistake. It seems as if something was to be made amends for, and we eagerly give in to every office of friendship, to atone for the injury of the error.

But perhaps there is something in the extent of countries, which, among the generality of people, insensibly communicates extension of the mind. The soul of an islander in its native state seems bounded by the foggy

confines of the water's edge, and all beyond affords to him matters only for profit or curiosity, not for friendship. His island is to him his world, and fixed to that, his every thing centres in it; while those who are inhabitants of a continent, by casting their eye over a larger field, take in likewise a larger intellectual circuit, and thus approaching nearer to an acquaintance with the universe, their atmosphere of thought is extended, and their liberality fills a wider space. In short, our minds seem to be measured by countries when we are men, as they are by places, when we are children, and until something happens to disentangle us from the prejudice, we serve under it without perceiving it.

In addition to this, it may be remarked, that men who study any universal science, the principles of which are universally known, or admitted, and applied without distinction to the common benefit of all countries, obtain thereby a larger share of philanthropy than those who only study national arts and improvements. Natural philosophy, mathematics and astronomy, carry the mind from the country to the creation, and give it a fitness suited to the extent. It was not Newton's honor, neither could it be his pride, that he was an Englishman, but that he was a philosopher The Heavens had liberated him from the prejudices of an island, and science had expanded his soul as boundless as his studies.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, March, 1780.

THE CRISIS.

NUMBER IX.

HAD America pursued her advantages with half the spirit that she resisted her misfortunes, she would, before now, have been a conquering and a peaceful people ; but lulled in the lap of soft tranquilllity, she rested on her hopes, and adversity only has convulsed her into action. Whether subtlety or sincerity, at the close of the last year, induced the enemy to an appearance for peace, is a point not material to know: it is sufficient that we see the effects it has had on our politics, and that we sternly rise to resent the delusion.

The war, on the part of America, has been a war of natural feelings. Brave in distress ; serene in conquest ; drowsy while at rest ; and in every situation generously disposed to peace. A dangerous calm, and a most heightened zeal, have, as circumstances varied, succeeded each other. Every passion, but that of despair, has been called to a tour of duty ; and so mistaken has been the enemy, of our abilities and disposition that when she supposed us conquered, we rose the conquerors. The extensiveness of the United States, and the variety of their resources ; the universality of their cause, the quick operation of their feelings, and the similarity of their sentiments, have, in every trying situation, produced a *something*, which, favored by Providence, and pursued with ardor, has accomplished in an instant the business of a campaign. We have never deliberately sought victory, but snatched it ; and bravely undone in an hour, the blotted operations of a season.

The reported fate of Charleston, like the misfortunes

of 1776, has at last called forth a spirit, and kindled up a flame, which perhaps no other event could have produced. If the enemy has circulated a falsehood, they have unwisely aggravated us into life, and if they have told us a truth, they have unintentionally done us a service. We were returning with folded arms from the fatigues of war, and thinking and sitting leisurely down to enjoy repose. The dependence that has been put upon Charleston threw a drowsiness over America. We looked on the business done—the conflict over—the matter settled —or that all which remained unfinished would follow of itself. In this state of dangerous relaxation, exposed to the poisonous infusions of the enemy, and having no common danger to attract our attention, we were extinguishing by stages the ardor we began with, and surrendering by piecemeal the virtue that defended us.

Afflicting as the loss of Charleston may be, yet if it universally rouse us from the slumber of twelve months past, and renew in us the spirit of former days, it will produce an advantage more important than its loss. America ever *is* what she *thinks* herself to be. Governed by sentiment and acting her own mind, she becomes as she pleases, the victor or the victim.

It is not the conquest of towns, nor the accidental capture of garrisons, that can reduce a country so extensive as this. The sufferings of one part can never be relieved by the exertions of another, and there is no situation the enemy can be placed in, that does not afford to us the same advantages he seeks himself. By dividing his force, he leaves every post attackable. It is a mode of war that carries with it a confession of weakness, and goes on the principle of distress, rather than conquest.

The decline of the enemy is visible, not only in their operations, but in their plans; Charleston originally made but a secondary object in the system of attack, and it is now become their principal one, because they have not

been able to succeed elsewhere. It would have carried a cowardly appearance in Europe had they formed their grand expedition in 1776, against a part of the continent where there was no army, or not a sufficient one to oppose them; but failing year after year in their impressions here, and to the eastward and northward, they deserted their first capital design, and prudently contenting themselves with what they can get, give a flourish of honor to conceal disgrace.

But this piecemeal work is not conquering the continent. It is a discredit in them to attempt it, and in us to suffer it. It is now full time to put an end to a war of aggravations, which, on one side, has no possible object, and on the other, has every inducement which honor, interest, safety and happiness can inspire. If we suffer them much longer to remain among us, we shall become as bad as themselves. An association of vices will reduce us more than the sword. A nation hardened in the practice of iniquity knows better how to profit by it, than a young country newly corrupted. We are not a match for them in the line of advantageous guilt, nor they to us on the principles which we bravely set out with. Our first days were our days of honor. They have marked the character of America wherever the story of her wars are told; and convinced of this, we have nothing to do but wisely and unitedly to tread the well known track. The progress of a war is often as ruinous to individuals, as the issue of it is to a nation; and it is not only necessary that our forces be such that we be conquerors in the end, but that by timely exertions we be secure in the interim. The present campaign will afford an opportunity which has never presented itself before, and the preparations for it are equally necessary, whether Charleston stand or fall. Suppose the first, it is in that case only a failure of the enemy, not a defeat. All the conquest that a besieged town can hope for, is,

not to be conquered; and compelling an enemy to raise the siege, is to the besieged a victory. But there must be a probability amounting almost to certainty, that would justify a garrison marching out to attack a retreat. Therefore should Charleston not be taken, and the enemy abandon the siege, every other part of the continent should prepare to meet them; and, on the contrary, should it be taken, the same preparations are necessary to balance the loss, and put ourselves in a condition to co-operate with our allies, immediately on their arrival.

We are not now fighting our battles alone, as we were in 1776; England, from a malicious disposition to America, has not only not declared war against France and Spain, but the better to prosecute her passions here, has afforded those powers no military object, and avoids them to distress us. She will suffer her West India islands to be overrun by France, and her southern settlements to be taken by Spain, rather than quit the object that gratifies her revenge. This conduct, on the part of Britain, has pointed out the propriety of France sending a naval and land force to co-operate with America on the spot. Their arrival cannot be very distant, nor the ravages of the enemy long. In the mean time the part necessary to us needs no illustration. The recruiting the army, and procuring the supplies, are the two things most necessary to be accomplished, and a capture of either of the enemy's divisions will restore to America peace and plenty.

At a crisis, big, like the present, with expectation and events, the whole country is called to unanimity and exertion. Not an ability ought now to sleep that can produce but a mite to the general good, nor even a whisper to pass that militates against it. The necessity of the case, and the importance of the consequences, admit no delay from a friend—no apology from an enemy. To spare now, would be the height of extravagance, and to consult present ease, would be to sacrifice it, perhaps forever.

America, rich in patriotism and produce, can want neither men nor supplies, when a serious necessity calls them forth. The slow operation of taxes, owing to the extensiveness of collection, and their depreciated value before they arrive in the treasury, have, in many instances, thrown a burden upon government, which has been artfully interpreted by the enemy into a general decline throughout the country. Yet this, inconvenient as it may at first appear, is not only remediable, but may be turned to an immediate advantage; for it makes no real difference, whether a certain number of men, or company of militia, (and in this country every man is a militia-man), are directed by law to send a recruit at their own expense, or whether a tax is laid on them for that purpose, and the man hired by government afterwards. The first, if there is any difference, is both cheapest and best, because it saves the expense which would attend collecting it as a tax, and brings a man sooner into the field than the modes of recruiting formerly used; and, on this principle, a law has been passed in this state, for recruiting two men from each company of militia, which will add upwards of a thousand to the force of the country.

But the flame which has broke forth in this city since the report from New York, of the loss of Charleston, not only does honor to the place, but like the blaze of 1776, will kindle into action the scattered sparks throughout America. The valor of a country may be learned by the bravery of its soldiery, and the general cast of its inhabitants, but confidence of success is best discovered by the active measures pursued by men of property; and when the spirit of enterprise becomes so universal as to act at once on all ranks of men, a war may then, and not till then, be styled truly popular.

In 1776, the ardor of the enterprising part was considerably checked by the real revolt of some, and the coolness of others. But in the present case, there is a firmness in the

substance and property of the country to the public cause. An association has been entered into by the merchants, tradesmen, and principal inhabitants of the city, to receive and support the new state money at the value of gold and silver; a measure which, while it does them honor, will likewise contribute to their interest, by rendering the operations of the campaign convenient and effectual.

Nor has the spirit of exertion stopped here. A voluntary subscription is likewise begun, to raise a fund of hard money, to be given as bounties, to fill up the full quota of the Pennsylvania line. It has been the remark of the enemy, that every thing in America has been done by the force of government; but when she sees individuals throwing in their voluntary aid, and facilitating the public measures in concert with the established powers of the country, it will convince her that the cause of America stands not on the will of a few, but on the broad foundation of property and popularity.

Thus aided and thus supported, disaffection will decline, and the withered head of tyranny expire in America. The ravages of the enemy will be short and limited, and like all their former ones, will produce a victory over themselves.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, June 9, 1780.

☞ At the time of writing this number of the *Crisis*, the loss of Charleston, though believed by some, was more confidently disbelieved by others. But there ought to be no longer a doubt upon the matter. Charleston is gone, and I believe for the want of a sufficient supply of provisions. The man that does not now feel for the honor of the best and noblest cause that ever a country engaged in, and exert himself accordingly, is no longer worthy of a peaceable residence among a people determined to be free.

C. S.

THE CRISIS.

NUMBER X.

ON THE SUBJECT OF TAXATION.

IT is impossible to sit down and think seriously on the affairs of America, but the original principles on which she resisted, and the glow and ardor they inspired, will occur like the undefaced remembrance of a lovely scene. To trace over in imagination the purity of the cause, the voluntary sacrifices made to support it, and all the various turnings of the war in its defence, is at once both paying and receiving respect. The principles deserve to be remembered, and to remember them rightly is repossessing them. In this indulgence of generous recollection we become gainers by what we seem to give, and the more we bestow the richer we become.

So extensively right was the ground on which America proceeded, that it not only took in every just and liberal sentiment which could impress the heart, but made it the direct interest of every class and order of men to defend the country. The war, on the part of Britain, was originally a war of covetousness. The sordid, and not the splendid passions gave it being. The fertile fields and prosperous infancy of America appeared to her as mines for tributary wealth. She viewed the hive, and disregarding the industry that had enriched it, thirsted for the honey. But in the present stage of her affairs, the violence of temper is added to the rage of avarice; and therefore, that which at the first setting out proceeded from purity of principle and public interest, is now

heightened by all the obligations of necessity; for it requires but little knowledge of human nature to discern what would be the consequence, were America again reduced to the subjection of Britain. Uncontrolled power, in the hands of an incensed, imperious, and rapacious conqueror, is an engine of dreadful execution, and woe be to that country over which it can be exercised. The names of whig and tory would then be sunk in the general term of rebel, and the oppression, whatever it might be, would, with very few instances of exception, light equally on all.

Britain did not go to war with America for the sake of dominion, because she was then in possession; neither was it for the extension of trade and commerce, because she had monopolized the whole, and the country had yielded to it; neither was it to extinguish what *she* might call rebellion, because before she began no resistance existed. It could then be from no other motive than avarice, or a design of establishing, in the first instance, the same taxes in America as are paid in England (which, as I shall presently show, are above eleven times heavier than the taxes we now pay for the present year, 1780) or, in the second instance, to confiscate the whole property of America, in case of resistance and conquest of the latter, of which she had then no doubt.

I shall now proceed to show what the taxes in England are, and what the yearly expense of the present war is to her — what the taxes of this country amount to, and what the annual expense of defending it effectually will be to us; and shall endeavor concisely to point out the cause of our difficulties, and the advantages on one side, and the consequences on the other, in case we do, or do not, put ourselves in an effectual state of defence. I mean to be open, candid, and sincere. I see a universal wish to expel the enemy from the country, a murmuring because the war is not carried on with more vigor, and my inten-

tion is to show, as shortly as possible, both the reason and the remedy.

The number of souls in England (exclusive of Scotland and Ireland) is seven millions,* and the number of souls in America is three millions.

The amount of taxes in England (exclusive of Scotland and Ireland) was, before the present war commenced, eleven millions six hundred and forty-two thousand six hundred and fifty-three pounds sterling; which, on an average, is no less a sum than one pound thirteen shillings and three-pence sterling per head per annum, men, women and children; besides county taxes, taxes for the support of the poor, and a tenth of all the produce of the earth for the support of the bishops and clergy.† Nearly five millions of this sum went annually to pay the interest of the national debt, contracted by former wars, and the remaining sum of six millions six hundred and forty-two thousand six hundred pounds was applied to defray the yearly expense of government, the peace establishment of the army and navy, placemen, pensioners, &c., consequently the whole of the enormous taxes being thus

* This is taking the highest number that the people of England have been, or can be rated at.

† The following is taken from Dr. Price's state of the taxes of England, pages, 96, 97, 98.

An account of the money drawn from the public by taxes, annually, being the medium of three years before the year 1776.

Amount of customs in England,	£2,528,275
Amount of the excise in England,	4,649,892
Land tax at 3*s*.	1,300,000
Land tax at 1*s*. in the pound,	450,000
Salt duties,	218,739
Duties on stamps, cards, dice, advertisements, bonds, leases, indentures, newspapers, almanacs, &c.	280,788
Duties on houses and windows,	385,369
Post office, seizures, wine licenses, hackney coaches, &c.	250,000
Annual profits from lotteries,	150,000
Expense of collecting the excise in England,	297,887
Expense of collecting the customs in England,	468,700
Interest of loans on the land tax at 4*s*. expenses of collection, militia, &c.	250,000
Perquisites, &c., to custom-house officers, &c., supposed	250,000
Expense of collecting the salt duties in England, 10½ per cent.	27,000
Bounties on fish exported,	18,000
Expense of collecting the duties on stamps, advertisements, &c., at 5¼ per cent.	18,000
Total	£11,642,653

appropriated, she had nothing to spare out of them towards defraying the expenses of the present war or any other. Yet had she not been in debt at the beginning of the war, as we were not, and like us had only a land and not a naval war to carry on, her then revenue of eleven millions and a half pounds sterling would have defrayed all her annual expenses of war and government within each year.

But this not being the case with her, she is obliged to borrow about ten million pounds sterling yearly, to prosecute the war she is now engaged in, (this year she borrowed twelve,) and lay on new taxes to discharge the interest; and allowing that the present war has cost her only fifty millions sterling, the interest thereon, at five per cent., will be two millions and an half: therefore the amount of her taxes now must be fourteen millions, which on an average is no less than forty shillings sterling, per head, men, women and children, throughout the nation. Now as this expense of fifty millions was borrowed on the hopes of conquering America, and as it was avarice which first induced her to commence the war, how truly wretched and deplorable would the condition of this country be, were she, by her own remissness, to suffer an enemy of such a disposition, and so circumstanced, to reduce her to subjection.

I now proceed to the revenues of America.

I have already stated the number of souls in America to be three millions, and by a calculation that I have made, which I have every reason to believe is sufficiently correct, the whole expense of the war, and the support of the several governments, may be defrayed for two million pounds sterling annually; which, on an average, is thirteen shillings and four pence per head, men, women, and children, and the peace establishment at the end of the war, will be but three quarters of a million, or five shillings sterling per head. Now, throwing out of the

question every thing of honor, principle, happiness, freedom and reputation in the world, and taking it up on the simple ground of interest, I put the following case:

Suppose Britain was to conquer America, and, as a conqueror, was to lay her under no other conditions than to pay the same proportion towards her annual revenue which the people of England pay; our share, in that case, would be six million pounds sterling yearly; can it then be a question, whether it is best to raise two millions to defend the country, and govern it ourselves, and only three quarters of a million afterwards, or pay six millions to have it conquered, and let the enemy govern it?

Can it be supposed that conquerors would choose to put themselves in a worse condition than what they granted to the conquered? In England, the tax on rum is five shillings and one penny sterling per gallon, which is one silver dollar and fourteen coppers. Now would it not be laughable to imagine, that after the expense they have been at, they would let either whig or tory drink it cheaper than themselves? Coffee, which is so considerable an article of consumption and support here, is there loaded with a duty, which makes the price between five and six shillings sterling per pound, and a penalty of fifty pounds sterling on any person detected in roasting it in his own house. There is scarcely a necessary of life that you can eat, drink, wear, or enjoy, that is not there loaded with a tax; even the light from heaven is only permitted to shine into their dwellings by paying eighteen pence sterling per window annually; and the humblest drink of life, small beer, cannot there be purchased without a tax of nearly two coppers per gallon, besides a heavy tax upon the malt, and another on the hops before it is brewed, exclusive of a land-tax on the earth which produces them. In short, the condition of that country, in point of taxation, is so oppressive, the number of her poor so great, and the extravagance and rapaciousness of

the court so enormous, that, were they to effect a conquest of America, it is then only that the distresses of America would begin. Neither would it signify any thing to a man whether he be whig or tory. The people of England, and the ministry of that country, know us by no such distinctions. What they want is clear, solid revenue, and the modes which they would take to procure it, would operate alike on all. Their manner of reasoning would be short, because they would naturally infer that, if we were able to carry on a war of five or six years against them, we were able to pay the same taxes which they do.

I have already stated that the expense of conducting the present war, and the government of the several states, may be done for two millions sterling, and the establishment in the time of peace, for three quarters of a million.*

As to navy matters, they flourish so well, and are so well attended to by individuals, that I think it consistent on every principle of real use and economy, to turn the navy into hard money (keeping only three or four packets) and apply it to the service of the army. We shall not have a ship the less; the use of them, and the benefit from them, will be greatly increased, and their expense saved. We are now allied with a formidable naval power, from whom we derive the assistance of a navy. And the line in which we can prosecute the war, so as to reduce the common enemy and benefit the alliance most effectually, will be by attending closely to the land service.

I estimate the charge of keeping up and maintaining an army, officering them, and all expenses included, sufficient for the defence of the country, to be equal to the expense of forty thousand men at thirty pounds

* I have made the calculations in sterling, because it is a rate generally known in all the states, and because, likewise, it admits of an easy comparison between our expenses to support the war, and those of the enemy. Four silver dollars and a half is one pound sterling, and three pence over.

sterling per head, which is one million two hundred thousand pounds.

I likewise allow four hundred thousand pounds for continental expenses at home and abroad.

And four hundred thousand pounds for the support of the several state governments—the amount will then be,

For the army - - - - - - -	£1,200,000
Continental expenses at home and abroad -	400,000
Government of the several states - -	400,000
Total	£2,000,000

I take the proportion of this state, Pennsylvania, to be an eighth part of the thirteen United States; the quota then for us to raise will be two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling; two hundred thousand of which will be our share for the support and pay of the army, and continental expenses at home and abroad, and fifty thousand pounds for the support of the state government.

In order to gain an idea of the porportion in which the raising such a sum will fall, I make the following calculation.

Pennsylvania contains three hundred and seventy-five thousand inhabitants, men, women and children; which is likewise an eighth of the number of inhabitants of the whole United States: therefore, two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling to be raised among three hundred and seventy-five thousand persons, is, on an average, thirteen shillings and four pence per head, per annum, or something more than one shilling sterling per month. And our proportion of three quarters of a million for the government of the country, in time of peace, will be ninety-three thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds sterling; fifty thousand of which will be for the government expenses of the state, and forty-three thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds for continental expenses at home and abroad.

The peace establishment then will, on an average, be

five shillings sterling per head. Whereas, was England now to stop, and the war cease, her peace establishment would continue the same as it is now, viz., forty shillings per head; therefore was our taxes necessary for carrying on the war as much per head as hers now is, and the difference to be only whether we should, at the end of the war, pay at the rate of five shillings per head, or forty shillings per head, the case needs no thinking of. But as we can securely defend and keep the country for one-third less than what our burden would be if it was conquered, and support the governments afterward for one-eighth of what Britain would levy on us, and could I find a miser whose heart never felt the emotion of a spark of principle, even that man, uninfluenced by every love but the love of money, and capable of no attachment but to his interest, would and must, from the frugality which governs him, contribute to the defence of the country, or he ceases to be a miser and becomes an idiot. But when we take in with it every thing that can ornament mankind; when the line of our interest becomes the line of our happiness: when all that can cheer and animate the heart; when a sense of honor, fame, character, at home and abroad, are interwoven not only with the security but the increase of property, there exists not a man in America, unless he be an hired emissary, who does not see that his good is connected with keeping up a sufficient defence.

I do not imagine that an instance can be produced in the world, of a country putting herself to such an amazing charge to conquer and enslave another, as Britain has done. The sum is too great for her to think of with any tolerable degree of temper; and when we consider the burden she sustains, as well as the disposition she has shown, it would be the height of folly in us to suppose that she would not reimburse herself by the most rapid means, had she America once more within

her power. With such an oppression of expense, what would an empty conquest be to her! What relief under such circumstances could she derive from a victory without a prize? It was money—it was revenue she first went to war for, and nothing but *that* would satisfy her. It is not the nature of avarice to be satisfied with any thing else. Every passion that acts upon mankind has a peculiar mode of operation. Many of them are temporary and fluctuating; they admit of cessation and variety. But avarice is a fixed, uniform passion. It neither abates of its vigor nor changes its object; and the reason why it does not, is founded in the nature of things, for wealth has not a rival where avarice is a ruling passion. One beauty may excel another, and extinguish from the mind of a man the pictured remembrance of a former one: but wealth is the phœnix of avarice, and therefore cannot seek a new object, because there is not another in the world.

I now pass on to show the value of the present taxes, and compare them with the annual expense; but this I shall preface with a few explanatory remarks.

There are two distinct things which make the payment of taxes difficult; the one is the large and real value of the sum to be paid, and the other is the scarcity of the thing in which the payment is to be made; and although these appear to be one and the same, they are in several instances not only different, but the difficulty springs from different causes.

Suppose a tax was to be laid equal to one-half of what a man's yearly income is, such a tax could not be paid, because the property could not be spared; and on the other hand, suppose a very trifling tax was laid, to be collected in *pearls*, such a tax likewise could not be paid, because they could not be had. Now any person may see that these are distinct cases, and the latter of them is a representation of our own.

That the difficulty cannot proceed from the former, that is, from the real value or weight of the tax, is evident at the first view to any person who will consider it.

The amount of the quota of taxes for the state, for the present year, 1780, (and so in proportion for every other state), is twenty millions of dollars, which, at seventy for one, is but sixty-four thousand two hundred and eighty pounds three shillings sterling, and on an average, is no more than three shillings and five pence sterling per head, per annum, per man, woman and child, or three pence two-fifths per head per month. Now here is a clear, positive fact, that cannot be contradicted, and which proves that the difficulty cannot be in the weight of the tax, for in itself it is a trifle, and far from being adequate to our quota of the expense of the war. The quit-rents of one penny sterling per acre on only one-half of the state, come to upwards of fifty thousand pounds, which is almost as much as all the taxes of the present year, and as those quit-rents made no part of the taxes then paid, and are now discontinued, the quantity of money drawn for public service this year, exclusive of the militia fines, which I shall take notice of in the process of this work, is less than what was paid and payable in any year preceding the revolution, and since the last war: what I mean is, that the quit-rents and taxes taken together came to a larger sum then, than the present taxes without the quit-rents do now.

My intention by these arguments and calculations is to place the difficulty to the right cause, and show that it does not proceed from the weight or worth of the tax, but from the scarcity of the medium in which it is paid; and to illustrate this point still further, I shall now show, that if the tax of twenty millions of dollars was of four times the value it now is, or nearly so, which would be about two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling, and would be our full quota, this sum would have been

raised with more ease, and have been less felt, than the present sum of only sixty-four thousand two hundred and eighty pounds.

The convenience or inconvenience of paying a tax in money arises from the quantity of money that can be spared out of trade.

When the emissions stopped, the continent was left in possession of two hundred millions of dollars, perhaps as equally dispersed as it was possible for trade to do it. And as no more was to be issued, the rise or fall of prices could neither increase nor diminish the quantity. It therefore remained the same through all the fluctuations of trade and exchange.

Now had the exchange stood at twenty for one, which was the rate congress calculated upon when they arranged the quota of the several states the latter end of last year, trade would have been carried on for nearly four times less money than it is now, and consequently the twenty millions would have been spared with much greater ease, and when collected would have been of almost four times the value that they now are. And on the other hand, was the depreciation to be ninety or one hundred for one, the quantity required for trade would be more than at sixty or seventy for one, and though the value of them would be less, the difficulty of sparing the money out of trade would be greater. And on these facts and arguments I rest the matter, to prove that it is not the want of property, but the scarcity of the medium by which the proportion of property for taxation is to be measured out, that makes the embarassment which we lie under. There is not money enough, and, what is equally as true, the people will not let there be money enough.

While I am on the subject of the currency, I shall offer one remark which will appear true to every body, and can be accounted for by nobody, which is, that the better the times were, the worse the money grew; and the worse the

times were, the better the money stood. It never depreciated by any advantage obtained by the enemy. The troubles of 1776, and the loss of Philadelphia in 1777, made no sensible impression on it, and every one knows that the surrender of Charleston did not produce the least alteration in the rate of exchange, which, for long before, and for more than three months after, stood at sixty for one. It seems as if the certainty of its being our own, made us careless of its value, and that the most distant thoughts of losing it made us hug it the closer, like something we were loth to part with; or that we depreciate it for our pastime, which, when called to seriousness by the enemy, we leave off to renew again at our leisure. In short, our good luck seems to break us, and our bad makes us whole.

Passing on from this digression, I shall now endeavor to bring into one view the several parts which I have already stated, and form thereon some propositions, and conclude.

I have placed before the reader, the average tax per head, paid by the people of England; which is forty shillings sterling.

And I have shown the rate on an average per head, which will defray all the expenses of the war to us, and support the several governments without running the the country into debt, which is thirteen shillings and four pence.

I have shown what the peace establishment may be conducted for, viz., an eighth part of what it would be if under the government of Britain.

And I have likewise shown what the average per head of the present taxes are, namely, three shillings and five-pence sterling, or three pence two-fifths per month; and that their whole yearly value, in sterling, is only sixty-four thousand two hundred and eighty pounds. Whereas our quota, to keep the payments equal with the expenses,

is two hundred and fifty thousand pounds. Consequently, there is a deficiency of one hundred and eighty-five thousand seven hundred and twenty pounds, and the same proportion of defect, according to the several quotas, happens in every other state. And this defect is the cause why the army has been so indifferently fed, clothed and paid. It is the cause, likewise, of the nerveless state of the campaign, and the insecurity of the country. Now, if a tax equal to thirteen and four pence per head, will remove all these difficulties, make people secure in their homes, leave them to follow the business of their stores and farms unmolested, and not only keep out, but drive out the enemy from the country; and if the neglect of raising this sum will let them in, and produce the evils which might be prevented—on which side, I ask, does the wisdom, interest and policy lie? Or, rather, would it not be an insult to reason, to put the question? The sum when proportioned out according to the several abilities of the people, can hurt no one, but an inroad from the enemy ruins hundreds of families.

Look at the destruction done in this city. The many houses totally destroyed, and others damaged; the waste of fences in the country round it, besides the plunder of furniture, forage and provision. I do not suppose that half a million sterling would reinstate the sufferers; and, does this, I ask, bear any proportion to the expense that would make us secure. The damage, on an average, is at least ten pounds sterling per head, which is as much as thirteen shillings and four pence per head comes to for fifteen years. The same has happened on the frontiers, and in the Jerseys, New York, and other places where the enemy has been—Carolina and Georgia are likewise suffering the same fate.

That the people generally do not understand the insufficiency of the taxes to carry on the war, is evident, not only from common observation, but from the con-

struction of several petitions, which were presented to the assembly of this state, against the recommendation of congress of the 18th of March last, for taking up and funding the present currency at forty for one, and issuing new money in its stead. The prayer of the petition was, *that the currency might be appreciated by taxes* (meaning the present taxes) *and that part of the taxes be applied to the support of the army, if the army could not be otherwise supported.* Now it could not have been possible for such a petition to have been presented, had the petitioners known that, so far from *part* of the taxes being sufficient for the support of the army, the *whole* of them falls three-fourths short of the year's expenses.

Before I proceed to propose methods by which a sufficiency of money may be raised, I shall take a short view of the general state of the country.

Notwithstanding the weight of the war, the ravages of the enemy, and the obstructions she has thrown in the way of trade and commerce, so soon does a young country outgrow misfortune, that America has already surmounted many that heavily oppressed her. For the first year or two of the war, we were shut up within our ports, scarce venturing to look towards the ocean. Now our rivers are beautified with large and valuable vessels, our stores filled with merchandise, and the produce of the country has a ready market, at an advantageous price. Gold and silver, that for a while seemed to have retreated again within the bowels of the earth, have once more risen into circulation, and every day adds new strength to trade, commerce and agriculture.

In a pamphlet, written by Sir John Dalrymple, and dispersed in America, in the year 1775, he asserted, that, "*two twenty-gun ships, nay,*" *says he,* "*tenders of those ships, stationed between Albemarle Sound and Chesapeake Bay, would shut up the trade of America for six hundred miles.*"

How little did Sir John Dalrymple know of the abilities of America!

While under the government of Britain, the trade of this country was loaded with restrictions. It was only a few foreign ports which we were allowed to sail to. Now it is otherwise; and allowing that the quantity of trade is but half what it was before the war, the case must show the vast advantage of an open trade, because the present quantity under her restrictions could not support itself; from which I infer, that if half the quantity without the restrictions can bear itself up nearly, if not quite as well, as the whole when subject to them, how prosperous must the condition of America be when the whole shall return open with all the world. By the trade I do not mean the employment of a merchant only, but the whole interest and business of the country taken collectively.

It is not so much my intention, by this publication, to propose particular plans for raising money, as it is to show the necessity and the advantages to be derived from it. My principal design is, from the disposition of the people to the measures which I am fully persuaded it is their interest and duty to adopt, and which needs no other force to accomplish them than the force of being felt. But as every hint may be useful, I shall throw out a sketch, and leave others to make such improvements upon it as to them may appear reasonable.

The annual sum wanted is two millions, and the average rate in which it falls, is thirteen shillings and four pence per head.

Suppose, then, that we raise half the sum and sixty thousand pounds over. The average rate thereof will be seven shillings per head.

In this case we shall have half the supply that we want, and an annual fund of sixty thousand pounds whereon to borrow the other million; because sixty

thousand pounds is the interest of a million at six per cent.; and if at the end of another year we should be obliged, by the continuance of the war, to borrow another million, the taxes will be increased to seven shillings and six pence; and thus for every million borrowed, an additional tax, equal to six pence per head, must be levied.

The sum to be raised next year will be one million and sixty thousand pounds: one-half of which I would propose should be raised by duties on imported goods, and the other by a tax on landed property and houses, or such other means as each state may devise.

But as the duties on imports and prize goods must be the same in all the states, therefore the rate per cent., or what other form the duty shall be laid, must be ascertained and regulated by Congress, and ingrafted in that form into the law of each state; and the monies arising therefrom carried into the treasury of each state. The duties to be paid in gold or silver.

There are many reasons why a duty on imports is the most convenient duty or tax that can be collected; one of which is, because the whole is payable in a few places in a country, and it likewise operates with the greatest ease and equality, because as every one pays in proportion to what they can afford, and therefore the tax is regulated by the abilities which every man supposes himself to have; or in other words, every man becomes his own assessor, and pays by a little at a time, when it suits him to buy. Besides, it is a tax which people may pay or let alone by not consuming the articles; and though the alternative may have no influence on their conduct, the power of choosing is an agreeable thing to the mind.

For my own part, it would be a satisfaction to me, was there a duty on all sorts of liquors during the war, as in my idea of things it would be an addition to the

pleasures of society, to know, that when the health of the army goes round, a few drops from every glass becomes theirs. How often have I heard an emphatical wish, almost accompanied with a tear, "*Oh, that our poor fellows in the field had some of this!*" Why then need we suffer under a fruitless sympathy, when there is a way to enjoy both the wish and the entertainment at once?

But the great national policy of putting a duty upon imports is, that it either keeps the foreign trade in our own hands, or draws something for the defence of the country from every foreigner who participates in it with us.

Thus much for the first half of the taxes, and as each state will best devise means to raise the other half, I shall confine my remarks to the resources of this state.

The quota, then, of this state, of one million and sixty thousand pounds, will be one hundred and thirty-three thousand two hundred and fifty pounds, the half of which is sixty-six thousand six hundred and twenty-five pounds; and supposing one-fourth part of Pennsylvania inhabited, then a tax of one bushel of wheat on every twenty acres of land, one with another, would produce the sum, and all the present taxes to cease. Whereas, tithes of the bishops and clergy in England, exclusive of the taxes, are upwards of half a bushel of wheat on *every single* acre of land, good and bad, throughout the nation.

In the former part of this paper, I mentioned the militia fines, but reserved speaking to the matter, which I shall now do. The ground I shall put it upon is, that two millions sterling a year will support a sufficient army, and all the expenses of war and government, without having recourse to the inconvenient method of continually calling men from their employments, which, of all others, is the most expensive and the least substantial.

I consider the revenues created by taxes as the first and principal thing, and fines only as secondary and accidental things. It was not the intention of the militia law to apply the fines to any thing else but the support of the militia, neither do they produce any revenue to the state, yet these fines amount to more than all the taxes: for taking the muster-roll to be sixty thousand men, the fine on forty thousand who may not attend, will be sixty thousand pounds sterling, and those who muster, will give up a portion of time equal to half that sum, and if the eight classes should be called within the year, and one-third turn out, the fine on the remaining forty thousand would amount to seventy-two millions of dollars, besides the fifteen shillings on every hundred pounds of property, and the charge of seven and a half per cent., for collecting, in certain instances, which, on the whole, would be upwards of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling.

Now if those very fines disable the country from raising a sufficient revenue without producing an equivalent advantage, would it not be for the ease and interest of all parties to increase the revenue, in the manner I have proposed, or any better, if a better can be devised, and cease the operation of the fines? I would still keep the militia as an organized body of men, and should there be a real necessity to call them forth, pay them out of the proper revenues of the state, and increase the taxes a third or fourth per cent., on those who do not attend.

My limits will not allow me to go further into this matter, which I shall therefore close with this remark; that fines are, of all modes of revenue, the most unsuited to the mind of a free country. When a man pays a tax, he knows that the public necessity requires it, and therefore feels a pride in discharging his duty; but a fine seems an atonement for neglect of duty, and of conse-

quence is paid with discredit, and frequently levied with severity.

I have now only one subject more to speak of, with which I shall conclude, which is, the resolve of Congress of the 18th of March last, for taking up and funding the present currency at forty for one, and issuing new money in its stead.

Every one knows that I am not a flatterer of Congress, but in this instance *they are right;* and if that measure is supported, the currency will acquire a value, which, without it, it will not. But this is not all: it will give relief to the finances until such time as they can be properly arranged, and save the country from being immediately double taxed under the present mode. In short, support that measure, and it will support you.

I have now waded through a tedious cause of difficult business, and over an untrodden path. The subject, on every point in which it could be viewed, was entangled with perplexities, and enveloped in obscurity, yet such are the resources of America, that she wants nothing but system to secure success.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, Oct. 6, 1780.

THE CRISIS.

NUMBER XI.

ON THE KING OF ENGLAND'S SPEECH.

OF all the innocent passions which actuate the human mind, there is none more universally prevalent than curiosity. It reaches all mankind, and in matters which concern us, or concern us not, it alike provokes in us a desire to know them.

Although the situation of America, superior to every effort to enslave her, and daily rising to importance and opulence, hath placed her above the region of anxiety, it has still left her within the circle of curiosity; and her fancy to see the speech of a man who had proudly threatened to bring her to his feet, was visibly marked with that tranquil confidence which cared nothing about its contents. It was inquired after with a smile, read with a laugh, and dismissed with disdain.

But, as justice is due, even to an enemy, it is right to say, that the speech is as well managed as the embarrassed condition of their affairs could well admit of; and though hardly a line of it is true, except the mournful story of Cornwallis, it may serve to amuse the deluded commons and people of England, for whom it was calculated.

"The war," says the speech, "is still unhappily prolonged by that restless ambition which first excited our enemies to commence it, and which still continues to disappoint my earnest wishes and diligent exertions to restore the public tranquillity."

How easy it is to abuse truth and language, when men, by habitual wickedness, have learned to set justice at defiance. That the very man who began the war, who with the most sullen insolence refused to answer, and even to hear the humblest of all petitions, who hath encouraged his officers and his army in the most savage cruelties, and the most scandalous plunderings, who hath stirred up the Indians on one side, and the negroes on the other, and invoked every aid of hell in his behalf, should now, with an affected air of pity, turn the tables from himself, and charge to another the wickedness that is his own, can only be equalled by the baseness of the heart that spoke it.

To be nobly wrong is more manly than to be meanly right, is an expression I once used on a former occasion, and it is equally applicable now. We feel something like respect for consistency even in error. We lament the virtue that is debauched into a vice, but the vice that effects a virtue becomes the more detestable: and amongst the various assumptions of character, which hypocrisy has taught, and men have practised, there is none that raises a higher relish of disgust, than to see disappointed inveteracy twisting itself, by the most visible falsehoods, into an appearance of piety it has no pretensions to.

"But I should not," continues the speech, "answer the trust committed to the sovereign of a *free people*, nor make a suitable return to my subjects for their constant, zealous, and affectionate attachment to my person, family and government, if I consented to sacrifice, either to my own desire of peace, or to their temporary ease and relief, *those essential rights and permanent interests*, upon the maintenance and preservation of which the future strength and security of this country must principally depend."

That the man whose ignorance and obstinacy first in-

volved and still continues the nation in the most hopeless and expensive of all wars, should now meanly flatter them with the name of a *free people*, and make a merit of his crime, under the disguise of their essential rights and permanent interests, is something which disgraces even the character of perverseness. Is he afraid they will send him to Hanover, or what does he fear? Why is the sycophant thus added to the hypocrite, and the man who pretends to govern, sunk into the humble and submissive memorialist?

What those essential rights and permanent interests are, on which the future strength and security of England must principally *depend*, are not so much as alluded to. They are words which impress nothing but the ear, and are calculated only for the sound.

But if they have any reference to America, then do they amount to the disgraceful confession, that England, who once assumed to be her protectress, has now become her *dependant*. The British king and ministry are constantly holding up the vast importance which America is of to England, in order to allure the nation to carry on the war: now, whatever ground there is for this idea, it ought to have operated as a reason for not beginning it; and, therefore, they support their present measures at their own disgrace, because the arguments they now use are a direct reflection on their former policy.

"The favorable appearance of affairs," continues the speech, "in the East Indies, and the safe arrival of the numerous commercial fleets of my kingdom, must have given you satisfaction."

That things are not *quite* so bad every where as in America may be some cause of consolation, but can be none for triumph. One broken leg is better than two, but still it is not a source of joy: and let the appearance of affairs in the East Indies be ever so favorable, they are nevertheless worse than at first, without a prospect

of their ever being better. But the mournful story of Cornwallis was yet to be told, and it was necessary to give it the softest introduction possible.

"But in the course of this year," continues the speech, "my assiduous endeavors to guard the extensive dominions of my crown, have not been attended with success equal to the justice and uprightness of my views."—What justice and uprightness there was in beginning a war with America, the world will judge of, and the unequalled barbarity with which it has been conducted, is not to be worn from the memory by the cant of snivelling hypocrisy.

"And it is with *great concern* that I inform you that the events of war have been very unfortunate to my arms in Virginia, having ended in the loss of my forces in that province."—And *our* great concern is that they are not all served in the same manner.

"No endeavors have been wanting on my part," says the speech, "to extinguish that spirit of rebellion which our enemies have found means to foment and maintain in the colonies; and to restore to my *deluded subjects* in America that happy and prosperous condition which they formerly derived from a due obedience to the laws."

The expression of *deluded subjects* is become so hacknied and contemptible, and the more so when we see them making prisoners of whole armies at a time, that the pride of not being laughed at would induce a man of common sense to leave it off. But the most offensive falsehood in the paragraph, is the attributing the prosperity of America to a wrong cause. It was the unremitted industry of the settlers and their descendants, the hard labor and toil of persevering fortitude, that were the true causes of the prosperity of America. The former tyranny of England served to people it, and the virtue of the adventurers to improve it. Ask the man who with his axe hath cleared a way in the wilderness

and now possesses an estate, what made him rich, and he will tell you the labor of his hands, the sweat of his brow, and the blessing of heaven. Let Britain but leave America to herself and she asks no more. She has risen into greatness without the knowledge and against the will of England, and has a right to the unmolested enjoyment of her own created wealth.

"I will order," says the speech, "the estimates of the ensuing year to be laid before you. I rely on your wisdom and public spirit for such supplies as the circumstances of our affairs shall be found to require. Among the many ill consequences which attend the continuation of the present war, I must sincerely regret the additional burdens which it must unavoidably bring upon my faithful subjects."

Strange! That a nation must run through such a labyrinth of trouble, and expend such a mass of wealth to gain the wisdom which an hour's reflection might have taught. The final superiority of America over every attempt which an island might make to conquer her, was as naturally marked in the constitution of things, as the future ability of a giant over a dwarf is delineated in his features while an infant. How far Providence, to accomplish purposes, which no human wisdom could foresee, permitted such extraordinary errors, will be believed by some and doubted by others, is still a secret in the womb of time, and must remain so till futurity shall give it birth.

"In the prosecution of this great and important contest," says the speech, "in which we are engaged, I retain a firm confidence in the *protection of divine Providence*, and a perfect conviction in the justice of my cause, and I have no doubt, but that, by the concurrence and support of my parliament, by the valor of my fleets and armies, and by a vigorous, animated, and united exertion of the faculties and resources of my people, I

shall be enabled to restore the blessings of a safe and honorable peace to all my dominions."

The king of England is one of the readiest believers in the world. In the beginning of the contest he passed an act to put America out of the protection of the crown of England, and though Providence, for seven years together hath put him out of *her* protection, still the man has no doubt. Like Pharoah on the edge of the Red Sea, he sees not the plunge he is making, and precipitately drives across the flood that is closing over his head.

I think it is a reasonable supposition, that this part of the speech was composed before the arrival of the news of the capture of Cornwallis : for it certainly has no relation to their condition at the time it was spoken. But, be this as it may, it is nothing to us. Our line is fixed. Our lot is cast. And America, the child of fate, is arriving at maturity. We have nothing to do but by a spirited and quick exertion, to stand prepared for war or peace. Too great to yield, and too noble to insult; superior to misfortune, and generous in success, let us untaintedly preserve the character we have gained, and show to future ages, an example of unequalled magnanimity.

There is something in the cause and consequence of America that has drawn on her the attention of all mankind. The world has seen her brave. Her love of liberty ; her ardor in supporting it ; the justice of her claims, and the constancy of her fortitude has won her the esteem of Europe, and attached to her interest the first power of that country.

Her situation now is such, that to whatever point, past, present or to come she casts her eyes, new matter arises to convince her she is right. In her conduct towards her enemy, no reproachful sentiment lurks in secret. No sense of injustice is left upon the mind.

Untainted with ambition and a stranger to revenge, her progress hath been marked by Providence, and she, in every stage of the conflict, hath blessed her with success.

But let not America wrap herself up in delusive hope and suppose the business done. The least remissness in preparation, the least relaxation in execution, will only serve to prolong the war and increase expenses. If our enemies can draw consolation from misfortune and exert themselves upon despair, how much more ought we, who are to win a continent by the conquest and have already an earnest of success?

Having in the preceding part made my remarks on the several matters which the speech contains, I shall now make my remarks on what it does not contain.

There is not a syllable in it respecting alliances. Either the injustice of Britain is too glaring, or her condition too desperate, or both, for any neighboring power to come to her support. In the beginning of the contest, when she had only America to contend with, she hired assistance from Hesse and other smaller states of Germany, and for nearly three years did America, young, raw, undisciplined and unprovided, stand against the power of Britain, aided by twenty thousand foreign troops, and made a complete conquest of one entire army. The remembrance of those things ought to inspire us with confidence and greatness of mind, and carry us through every remaining difficulty with content and cheerfulness. What are the little sufferings of the present day, compared with the hardships that are past. There was a time, when we had neither house nor home in safety; when every hour was the hour of alarm and danger; when the mind, tortured with anxiety knew no repose, and every thing but hope and fortitude, was bidding us farewell.

It is of use to look back upon these things; to call to mind the times of trouble and the scenes of complicated

anguish that are past and gone. Then every expense was cheap, compared with the dread of conquest and the misery of submission. We did not stand debating upon trifles, nor contending about the necessary and unavoidable charges of defence. Every one bore his lot of suffering, and looked forward to happier days and scenes of rest.

Perhaps one of the greatest dangers which any country can be exposed to, arises from a kind of trifling which sometimes steals upon the mind, when it supposes the danger past; and this unsafe situation marks at this time the peculiar crisis of America. What would she once have given to have known that her condition at this day should be what it now is? And yet we do not seem to place a proper value upon it, nor vigorously pursue the necessary measures to secure it. We know that we cannot be defended, nor yet defend ourselves, without trouble and expense. We have no right to expect it; neither ought we to look for it. We are a people, who, in our situation, differ from all the world. We form one common floor of public good, and, whatever is our charge, it is paid for our own interest and upon our own account.

Misfortune and experience have now taught us system and method; and the arrangements for carrying on the war are reduced to rule and order. The quota of the several states are ascertained, and I intend in a future publication to show what they are, and the necessity as well as the advantages of vigorously providing them.

In the mean time, I shall conclude this paper with an instance of *British clemency*, from Smollett's *History of England*, vol. xi, page 239, printed in London. It will serve to show how dismal is the situation of a conquered people, and that the only security is an effectual defence.

We all know that the Stuart family and the house of Hanover opposed each other for the crown of England.

The Stuart family stood first in the line of succession, but the other was the most successful.

In July, 1745, Charles, the son of the exiled king, landed in Scotland, collected a small force, at no time exceeding five or six thousand men, and made some attempts to re-establish his claim. The late Duke of Cumberland, uncle to the present king of England, was sent against him, and on the 16th of April following, Charles was totally defeated at Culloden, in Scotland. Success and power are the only situations in which clemency can be shown, and those who are cruel, because they are victorious, can with the same facility act any other degenerate character.

"Immediately after the decisive action at Culloden, the Duke of Cumberland took possession of Inverness; where six and thirty deserters, convicted by a court martial, were ordered to be executed: then he detached several parties to ravage the country. One of these apprehended the lady Mackintosh, (who was sent prisoner to Inverness,) plundered her house, and drove away her cattle, though her husband was actually in the service of the government. The castle of Lord Lovat was destroyed. The French prisoners were sent to Carlisle and Penrith. Kilmarnock, Balmerino, Cromartie and his son, the Lord Macleod, were conveyed by sea to London; and those of an inferior rank were confined in different prisons. The Marquis of Tullibardine, together with a brother of the Earl of Dunmore, and Murray, the pretender's secretary, were seized and transported to the tower of London, to which the Earl of Traquaire had been committed on suspicion; and the eldest son of Lord Lovat was imprisoned in the castle of Edinburgh. In a word, all the jails in Great Britain, from the capital, northwards, were filled with those unfortunate captives; and great numbers of them were crowded together in the holds of ships, where they perished in the most deplorable

manner, for want of air and exercise. Some rebel chiefs escaped in two French frigates that arrived on the coast of Lochaber about the end of April, and engaged three vessels belonging to his Britannic majesty, which they obliged to retire. Others embarked on board a ship on the coast of Buchan, and were conveyed to Norway, from whence they travelled to Sweden. In the month of May, the Duke of Cumberland advanced with the army into the Highlands, as far as Fort Augustus, where he encamped; and sent off detachments on all hands, to hunt down the fugitives, and lay waste the country with fire and sword. The castles of Glengary and Lochiel were plundered and burned; every house, hut, or habitation met with the same fate without distinction, and all the cattle and provision were carried off. The men were either shot upon the mountains, like wild beasts, or put to death in cold blood, without form or trial;—the women, after having seen their husbands and fathers murdered, were subjected to brutal violation, and then turned out naked, with their children, to starve on the barren heaths. One whole family was enclosed in a barn, and consumed to ashes. Those ministers of vengeance were so alert in the execution of their office, that in a few days there was neither house, cottage, man, nor beast, to be seen within the compass of fifty miles; all was ruin, silence, and desolation."

I have here presented the reader with one of the most shocking instances of cruelty ever practised, and I leave it to rest on his mind, that he may be fully impressed with a sense of the destruction he has escaped, in case Britain had conquered America; and likewise, that he may see and feel the necessity, as well for his own personal safety, as for the honor, the interest, and happiness of the whole community, to omit or delay no one preparation necessary to secure the ground which we so happily stand upon.

TO THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA.

ON THE EXPENSES, ARRANGEMENTS AND DISBURSEMENTS FOR CARRYING ON THE WAR, AND FINISHING IT WITH HONOR AND ADVANTAGE.

WHEN any necessity or occasion has pointed out the convenience of addressing the public, I have never made it a consideration whether the subject was popular or unpopular, but whether it was right or wrong; for that which is right will become popular, and that which is wrong, though by mistake it may obtain the cry or fashion of the day, will soon lose the power of delusion, and sink into disesteem.

A remarkable instance of this happened in the case of Silas Deane; and I mention this circumstance with the greater ease, because the poison of his hypocrisy spread over the whole country, and every man, almost without exception, thought me wrong in opposing him. The best friends I then had, except Mr. Laurens, stood at a distance, and this tribute, which is due to his constancy, I pay to him with respect, and that the readier, because he is not here to hear it. If it reaches him in his imprisonment, it will afford him an agreeable reflection.

"*As he rose like a rocket, he will fall like the stick*," is a metaphor which I applied to Mr. Deane in the first piece which I published respecting him, and he has exactly fulfilled the description. The credit he so unjustly obtained from the public, he lost in almost as short a time. The delusion perished as it fell, and he soon saw himself stripped of popular support. His more intimate acquaintances began to doubt and to desert him long before he left America, and at his departure he saw himself the object of general suspicion. When he arrived in France, he endeavored to effect by treason what he had failed to accomplish by fraud. His plans, schemes and

projects, together with his expectation of being sent to Holland to negotiate a loan of money, had all miscarried. He then began traducing and accusing America of every crime, which could injure her reputation. "That she was a ruined country; that she only meant to make a tool of France, to get what money she could out of her, and then to leave her, and accommodate with Britain." Of all which, and much more, Colonel Laurens and myself, when in France, informed Dr. Franklin, who had not before heard of it. And to complete the character of a traitor, he has, by letters to this country since, (some of which in his own hand writing are now in the possession of Congress,) used every expression and argument in his power to injure the reputation of France, and to advise America to renounce her alliance, and surrender up her independence.* Thus in France, he abuses America, and in his letters to America he abuses France; and is endeavoring to create disunion between the two countries, by the same arts of double-dealing by which he caused dissensions among the commissioners in Paris, and distractions in America. But his life has been fraud, and his character is that of a plodding, plotting, cringing mercenary, capable of any disguise that suited his purpose. His final detection has very happily cleared up those mistakes, and removed that uneasiness, which his unprincipled conduct occasioned. Every one now sees him in the same light; for towards friends or enemies he acted with the same deception and injustice, and his name, like that of *Arnold*, ought now to be forgotten among us. As this is the first time I have mentioned him since my return from France, it is my intention it shall be the last. From this digression,

* Mr. William Marshall, of this city, formerly a pilot, who had been taken at sea and carried to England, and got from thence to France, brought over letters from Mr. Deane to America, one of which was directed to "Robert Morris, Esq." Mr. Morris sent it unopened to Congress, and advised Mr. Marshall to deliver the others there, which he did. The letters were of the same purport with those which have been already published under the signature of S. Deane, to which they had frequent reference.

which for several reasons I thought necessary to give, I now proceed to the purport of my address.

I consider the war of America against Britain as the country's war, the public's war, or the war of the people in their own behalf, for the security of their natural rights and the protection of their own property. It is not the war of Congress, the war of the Assemblies, or the war of government, in any line whatever. The country first, by a mutual compact, resolved to defend their rights and maintain their independence, *at the hazard of their lives and fortunes.* They elected their representatives, by whom they appointed their members to Congress, and said, *act you for us, and we will support you.* This is the true ground and principle of the war on the part of America, and consequently, there remains nothing to do, but for every one to fulfill his obligation.

It was next to impossible that a new country, engaged in a new undertaking, could set off systematically right at first. She saw not the extent of the struggle she was involved in, neither could she avoid the beginning. She supposed every step she took, and every resolution she formed, would bring her enemy to reason, and close the contest. Those failing, she was forced into new measures ; and these, like the former, being fitted to her expectations, and failing in their turn, left her continually unprovided and without system. The enemy likewise was induced to prosecute the war, from the temporary expedients we adopted for carrying it on. We were continually expecting to see their credit exhausted, and they were looking to see our currency fail ; and thus, between their watching us and we them, the hopes of both have been deceived, and the childishness of the expectation has served to increase the expense.

Yet who, through this wilderness of error, has been to blame ? Where if the man who can say, the fault has not

in part been his? They were the natural, unavoidable errors of the day. They were the errors of a whole country, which nothing but experience could detect, and time remove. Neither could the circumstances of America admit of system, till either the paper currency was fixed or laid aside. No calculation of finance could be made on a medium failing without reason, and fluctuating without rule.

But there is one error which might have been prevented, and was not; and as it is not my custom to flatter, but to serve mankind, I will speak it freely. It certainly was the duty of every assembly on the continent to have known, at all times, what was the condition of its treasury, and to have ascertained at every period of depreciation, how much the real worth of the taxes fell short of their nominal value. This knowledge, which might have been easily obtained, would have enabled them to have kept their constituents well informed, which is one of the greatest duties of representation. They ought to have studied and calculated the expenses of the war, the quota of each state, and the consequent proportion that would fall on each man's property for his defence; and this must easily have shown to them, that a tax of one hundred pounds could not be paid by a bushel of apples or an hundred of flour, which was often the case two or three years ago. But instead of this, which would have been plain and upright dealing, the little line of temporary popularity, the feather of an hour's duration, was too much pursued; and in this involved condition of things, every state, for the want of a little thinking, or a little information, supposed that it supported the whole expenses of the war, when in fact it fell, by the time the tax was levied and collected, above three-fourths short of its own quota.

Impressed with a sense of the danger to which the country was exposed by this lax method of doing busi-

ness, and the prevailing errors of the day, I published, last October was a twelvemonth, *The Crisis Extraordinary*, on the revenues of America, and the yearly expense of carrying on the war. My estimation of the latter, together with the civil list of Congress, and the civil list of the several states, was two million pounds sterling, which is very nearly nine millions of dollars.

Since that time, Congress have gone into a calculation, and have estimated the expenses of the war department and the civil list of Congress (exclusive of the civil list of the several governments) at eight millions of dollars; and as the remaining million will be fully sufficient for the civil list of the several states, the two calculations are exceedingly near each other.

The sum of eight millions of dollars they have called upon the states to furnish, and their quotas are as follows, which I shall preface with the resolution itself.

"By the United States in Congress assembled.

October 30, 1781.

"*Resolved*, That the respective states be called upon to furnish the Treasury of the United States with their quotas of eight millions of dollars, for the war department and civil list for the ensuing year, to be paid quarterly, in equal proportions, the first payment to be made on the first day of April next.

"*Resolved*, That a committee consisting of a member from each state, be appointed to apportion to the several states the quota of the above sum.

"*November 2nd.* The committee appointed to ascertain the proportions of the several states of the monies to be raised for the expenses of the ensuing year, report the following resolutions:

"That the sum of eight millions of dollars, as required to be raised by the resolutions of the 30th of October last, be paid by the states in the following proportion:

New Hampshire	$373,598
Massachusetts	1,307,596
Rhode Island	216,684
Connecticut	747,196
New York	373,598
New Jersey	485,679
Pennsylvania	1,120,794
Delaware	112,085
Maryland	933,996
Virginia	1,307,594
North Carolina	622,677
South Carolina	373,598
Georgia	24,905
	$8,000,000

"*Resolved*, That it be recommended to the several states, to lay taxes for raising their quotas of money for the United States, separate from those laid for their own particular use."

On these resolutions I shall offer several remarks.

First, On the sum itself, and the ability of the country.

Secondly, On the several quotas, and the nature of a union. And,

Thirdly, On the manner of collection and expenditure.

First, On the sum itself, and the ability of the country. As I know my own calculation is as low as possible, and as the sum called for by Congress, according to their calculation, agrees very nearly therewith, I am sensible it cannot possibly be lower. Neither can it be done for that, unless there is ready money to go to market with; and even in that case, it is only by the utmost management and economy that it can be made to do.

By the accounts which were laid before the British parliament last spring, it appeared that the charge of only subsisting, that is, feeding their army in America, cost annually four million pounds sterling, which is very nearly eighteen millions of dollars. Now if, for eight millions, we can feed, clothe, arm, provide for and pay an army sufficient for our defence, the very comparison shows that the money must be well laid out.

It may be of some use, either in debate or conversa-

tion, to attend to the progress of the expenses of an army, because it will enable us to see on what part any deficiency will fall. The *first* thing is, to feed them and provide for the sick. *Secondly*, to clothe them. *Thirdly*, to arm and furnish them. *Fourthly*, to provide means for removing them from place to place. And, *Fifthly*, to pay them.

The first and second are absolutely necessary to them as men. The third and fourth are equally as necessary to them as an army. And the fifth is their just due. Now, if the sum which shall be raised should fall short, either by the several acts of the states for raising it, or by the manner of collecting it, the deficiency will fall on the fifth head, the soldier's pay, which would be defrauding them, and eternally disgracing ourselves. It would be a blot on the councils, the country, and the revolution of America, and a man would hereafter be ashamed to own he had any hand in it.

But if the deficiency should be still shorter, it would next fall on the fourth head, *the means of moving the army from place to place:* and in this case, the army must either stand still where it can be of no use, or seize on horses, carts, wagons, or any means of transportation which it can lay hold of ; and in this instance the country suffers. In short, every attempt to do a thing for less than it can be done for, is sure to become at last both a loss and a dishonor.

But the country cannot bear it, say some. This has been the most expensive doctrine that ever was held out, and cost America millions of money for nothing. Can the country bear to be overrun, ravaged, and ruined by an enemy? This will immediately follow where defence is wanting, and defence will ever be wanting where sufficient revenues are not provided. But this is only one part of the folly. The second is, that when the danger comes, invited in part by our not preparing against it, we have been obliged, in a number of instances, to ex-

pend double the sums to do that which at first might have been done for half the money. But this is not all. A third mischief has been, that grain of all sorts, flour, beef, fodder, horses, carts, wagons, or whatever was absolutely or immediately wanted, have been taken without pay. Now, I ask, why was all this done, but from that extremely weak and expensive doctrine, *that the country could not bear it?* That is, that she could not bear, in the first instance, that which would have saved her twice as much at last; or, in proverbial language, that she could not bear to pay a penny to save a pound; the consequence of which has been, that she has paid a pound for a penny. Why are there so many unpaid certificates in almost every man's hands, but from the parsimony of not providing sufficient revenues? Besides, the doctrine contradicts itself; because, if the whole country cannot bear it, how is it possible that a part should? And yet this has been the case; for those things have been had; and they must be had; but the misfortune is, that they have been obtained in a very unequal manner, and upon expensive credit, whereas, with ready money, they might have been purchased for half the price, and nobody distressed.

But there is another thought which ought to strike us, which is: How is the army to bear the want of food, clothing and other necessaries? The man who is at home, can turn himself a thousand ways, and find as many means of ease, convenience or relief; but a soldier's life admits of none of these; their wants cannot be supplied from themselves; for an army, though it is the defence of a state, is at the same time the child of a country, and must be provided for in every thing.

And lastly, The doctrine is false. There are not three millions of people in any part of the universe, who live so well, or have such a fund of ability as in America. The income of a common laborer, who is industrious, is equal to that of the generality of tradesmen in England.

In the mercantile line, I have not heard of one who could be said to be a bankrupt since the war began, and in England they have been without number. In America almost every farmer lives on his own lands, and in England not one in a hundred does. In short, it seems as if the poverty of that country had made them furious, and they were determined to risk all to recover all.

Yet, notwithstanding those advantages on the part of America, true it is, that had it not been for the operation of taxes for our necessary defence, we had sunk into a state of sloth and poverty: for there was more wealth lost by neglecting to till the earth in the years 1776, '77, and '78, than the quota of the tax amounts to. That which is lost by neglect of this kind, is lost for ever: whereas that which is paid, and continues in the country, returns to us again; and at the same time that it provides us with defence, it operates not only as a spur, but as a premium to our industry.

I shall now proceed to the second head, *viz.*, *on the several quotas, and the nature of a union.*

There was a time when America had no other bond of union, than that of common interest and affection. The whole country flew to the relief of Boston, and making her cause their own, participated in her cares and administered to her wants. The fate of war, since that day, has carried the calamity in a ten-fold proportion to the southward; but in the mean time the union has been strengthened by a legal compact of the states, jointly and severally ratified, and that which before was choice, or the duty of affection, is now likewise the duty of legal obligation.

The union of America is the foundation-stone of her independence—the rock on which it is built; and is something so sacred in her constitution, that we ought to watch every word we speak, and every thought we think, that we injure it not, even by mistake. When a multitude, extended, or rather scattered over a conti-

nent in the manner we are, mutually agree to form one common centre whereon the whole shall move to accomplish a particular purpose, all parts must act together and alike, or act not at all, and a stoppage in any one is a stoppage of the whole, at least for a time.

Thus the several states have sent representatives to assemble together in Congress, and they have empowered that body, which thus becomes their centre, and are no other than themselves in representation, to conduct and manage the war, while their constituents at home attend to the domestic cares of the country, their internal legislation, their farms, professions or employments. For it is only reducing complicated things to method and orderly connection that they can be understood with advantage, or pursued with success. Congress, by virtue of this delegation, estimates the expense, and apportions it out to the several parts of the empire according to their several abilities; and here the debate must end, because each state has already had its voice, and the matter has undergone its whole portion of argument, and can no more be altered by any particular state, than a law of any state, after it has passed, can be altered by any individual. For with respect to those things which immediately concern the union, and for which the union was purposely established, and is intended to secure, each state is to the United States what each individual is to the state he lives in. And it is on this grand point, this movement upon one centre, that our existence as a nation, our happiness as a people, and our safety as individuals depend.

It may happen that some state or other may be somewhat over or under rated, but this cannot be much. The experience which has been had upon the matter, has nearly ascertained their several abilities. But even in this case, it can only admit of an appeal to the United States, but cannot authorize any state to make the alteration itself, any more than our internal government can

admit an individual to do so in the case of an act of assembly; for if one state can do it, then may another do the same, and the instant this is done the whole is undone.

Neither is it supposable that any single state can be a judge of all the comparative reasons which may influence the collective body in arranging the quotas of the continent. The circumstances of the several states are frequently varying, occasioned by the accidents of war and commerce, and it will often fall upon some to help others, rather beyond what their exact proportion at another time might be; but even this assistance is as naturally and politically included in the idea of a union, as that of any particular assigned proportion; because we know not whose turn it may be next to want assistance, for which reason that is the wisest state which sets the best example.

Though in matters of bounden duty and reciprocal affection, it is rather a degeneracy from the honesty and ardor of the heart to admit any thing selfish to partake in the government of our conduct, yet in cases where our duty, our affections, and our interest all coincide, it may be of some use to observe their union. The United States will become heir to an extensive quantity of vacant land, and their several titles to shares and quotas thereof, will naturally be adjusted according to their relative quotas, during the war, exclusive of that inability which may unfortunately arise to any state by the enemy holding possession of a part; but as this is a cold matter of interest, I pass it by, and proceed to my third head, *viz.*

ON THE MANNER OF COLLECTION AND EXPENDITURE.

It hath been our error, as well as our misfortune, to blend the affairs of each state, especially in money matters, with those of the United States; whereas it is to our ease, convenience and interest to keep them separate. The expenses of the United States for carrying on the war, and the expenses of each state for its own do-

mestic government, are distinct things, and to involve them is a source of perplexity and a cloak for fraud. I love method, because I see and am convinced of its beauty and advantage. It is that which makes all business easy and understood, and without which every thing becomes embarassed and difficult.

There are certain powers which the people of each state have delegated to their legislative and executive bodies, and there are other powers which the people of every state have delegated to Congress, among which is that of conducting the war, and consequently, of managing the expenses attending it; for how else can that be managed, which concerns every state, but by a delegation from each? When a state has furnished its quota, it has an undoubted right to know how it has been applied, and it is as much the duty of Congress to inform the state of the one, as it is the duty of the state to provide the other.

In the resolution of Congress already recited, it is recommended to the several states *to lay taxes for raising their quotas of money for the United States, separate from those laid for their own particular use.*

This is a most necessary point to be observed, and the distinction should follow all the way through. They should be levied, paid and collected separately, and kept separate in every instance. Neither have the civil officers of any state, or the government of that state, the least right to touch that money which the people pay for the support of their army and the war, any more than Congress has to touch that which each state raises for its own use.

This distinction will naturally be followed by another. It will occasion every state to examine nicely into the expenses of its civil list, and to regulate, reduce and bring it into better order than it has hitherto been; because the money for that purpose must be raised apart, and accounted for to the public separately. But while the moneys of both were blended, the necessary nicety

was not observed, and the poor soldier, who ought to have been the first, was the last who was thought of.

Another convenience will be, that the people, by paying the taxes separately, will know what they are for; and will likewise know that those which are for the defence of the country will cease with the war, or soon after. For although, as I have before observed, the war is their own, and for the support of their own rights and the protection of their own property, yet they have the same right to know, that they have to pay, and it is the want of not knowing that is often the cause of dissatisfaction. This regulation of keeping the taxes separate has given rise to a regulation in the office of finance, by which it is directed.

"That the receivers shall, at the end of every month, make out an exact account of the monies received by them respectively, during such month, specifying therein the names of the persons from whom the same shall have been received, the dates and the sums; which account they shall respectively cause to be published in one of the newspapers of the state; to the end that every citizen may know how much of the monies collected from him in taxes, is transmitted to the treasury of the United States for the support of the war; and also, that it may be known what monies have been at the order of the superintendent of finance. It being proper and necessary that, in a free country, the people should be as fully informed of the administration of their affairs as the nature of things will admit."

It is an agreeable thing to see a spirit of order and economy taking place, after such a series of errors and difficulties. A government or an administration, that means and acts honestly, has nothing to fear, and consequently has nothing to conceal; and it would be of use if a monthly or quarterly account was to be published, as well of the expenditures as of the receipts. Eight millions of dollars must be husbanded with an exceeding deal of care to

make it do, and therefore, as the management must be reputable, the publication would be serviceable.

I have heard of petitions which have been presented to the assembly of this state (and probably the same may have happened in other states) praying to have the taxes lowered. Now the only way to keep taxes low, is for the United States to have ready money to go to market with; and though the taxes to be raised for the present year will fall heavy, and there will naturally be some difficulty in paying them, yet the difficulty, in proportion as money spreads about the country, will every day grow less, and in the end we shall save some millions of dollars by it. We see what a bitter, revengeful enemy we have to deal with, and any expense is cheap compared to their merciless paw. We have seen the unfortunate Carolineans hunted like partridges on the mountains, and it is only by providing means for our defence, that we shall be kept from the same condition. When we think or talk about taxes, we ought to recollect that we lie down in peace and sleep in safety — that we can follow our farms or stores or other occupations, in prosperous tranquillity; and that these inestimable blessings are procured to us by the taxes that we pay. In this view, our taxes are properly our insurance money; they are what we pay to be made safe, and in strict policy are the best money we can lay out.

It was my intention to offer some remarks on the impost law of five per cent. recommended by Congress, and to be established as a fund for the payment of the loan-office certificates, and other debts of the United States; but I have already extended my piece beyond my intention. And as this fund will make our system of finance complete, and is strictly just, and consequently requires nothing but honesty to do it, there needs but little to be said upon it.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, March 5, 1782.

THE CRISIS.

NUMBER XII.

ON THE PRESENT STATE OF NEWS.

SINCE the arrival of two, if not three packets, in quick succession, at New York, from England, a variety of unconnected *news* has circulated through the country, and afforded as great a variety of speculation.

That something is the matter in the cabinet and councils of our enemies, on the other side of the water, is certain—that they have run their length of madness and are under the necessity of changing their measures, may easily be seen into; but to what this change of measures may amount, or how far it may correspond with our interest, happiness and duty, is yet uncertain; and from what we have hitherto experienced, we have too much reason to suspect them in every thing.

I do not address this publication so much to the people of America as to the British ministry, whoever they may be, for if it is their intention to promote any kind of negotiation, it is proper they should know beforehand, that the United States have as much honor as bravery; and that they are no more to be seduced from their alliance than their allegiance; that their line of politics is formed and not dependant, like that of their enemy, on chance and accident.

On our part, in order to know, at any time, what the British government will do, we have only to find out what they ought *not* to do, and this last will be their conduct. Forever changing and forever wrong; too

distant from America to improve circumstances, and too unwise to foresee them; scheming without principle, and executing without probability, their whole line of management has hitherto been blunder and baseness. Every campaign has added to their loss, and every year to their disgrace: till unable to go on, and ashamed to go back, their politics have come to a halt, and all their fine prospects to a halter.

Could our affections forgive, or humanity forget the wounds of an injured country—we might, under the influence of a momentary oblivion, stand still and laugh. But they are engraven where no amusement can conceal them, and of a kind for which there is no recompense. Can ye restore to us the beloved dead? Can ye say to the grave, give up the murdered? Can ye obliterate from our memories those who are no more? Think not then to tamper with our feelings by insidious contrivance, nor suffocate our humanity by seducing us to dishonor.

In March, 1780, I published part of the *Crisis*, No. VIII, in the newspapers, but did not conclude it in the following papers, and the remainder has lain by me till the present day.

There appeared about that time some disposition in the British cabinet to cease the further prosecution of the war, and as I had formed my opinion that whenever such a design should take place, it would be accompanied with a dishonorable proposition to America, respecting France, I had suppressed the remainder of that number, not to expose the baseness of any such proposition. But the arrival of the next news from England, declared her determination to go on with the war, and consequently as the political object I had then in view was not really a subject, it was unnecessary in me to bring it forward, which is the reason it was never published.

The matter which I allude to in the unpublished part, I shall now make a quotation of, and apply it as the more

enlarged state of things, at this day, shall make convenient or necessary.

It was as follows:

"By the speeches which have appeared from the British parliament, it is easy to perceive to what impolitic and imprudent excesses their passions and prejudices have, in every instance, carried them during the present war. Provoked at the upright and honorable treaty between America and France, they imagined that nothing more was necessary to be done to prevent its final ratification, than to promise, through the agency of their commissioners (Carlisle, Eden, and Johnston) a repeal of their once offensive acts of parliament. The vanity of the conceit was as unpardonable as the experiment was impolitic. And so convinced am I of their wrong ideas of America, that I shall not wonder, if in their last stage of political frenzy, they propose to her to break her alliance with France, and enter into one with them. Such a proposition, should it ever be made, and it has already been more than once hinted at in parliament, would discover such a disposition to perfidiousness and such disregard of honor and morals, as would add the finishing vice to national corruption. I do not mention this to put America on the watch, but to put England on her guard, that she do not, in the looseness of her heart, envelope in disgrace every fragment of reputation." Thus far the quotation.

By the complexion of some part of the news which has transpired through the New York papers, it seems probable that this insidious era in the British politics is beginning to make its appearance. I wish it may not; for that which is a disgrace to human nature, throws something of a shade over all the human character, and each individual feels his share of the wound that is given to the whole.

The policy of Britain has ever been to divide America

in some way or other. In the beginning of the dispute, she practised every art to prevent or destroy the union of the states, well knowing that could she once get them to stand singly, she could conquer them unconditionally. Failing in this project in America, she renewed it in Europe; and after the alliance had taken place, she made secret offers to France to induce her to give up America; and what is still more extraordinary, she at the same time made propositions to Dr. Franklin, then in Paris, the very court to which she was secretly applying, to draw off America from France. But this is not all.

On the 14th of September, 1778, the British court, through their secretary, Lord Weymouth, made application to the Marquis d'Almadovar, the Spanish ambassador at London, to "ask the *mediation*," for these were the words of the court of Spain, for the purpose of negotiating a peace with France, leaving America (as I shall hereafter show) out of the question. Spain readily offered her mediation, and likewise the city of Madrid as the place of conference, but withal, proposed, that the United States of America should be invited to the treaty, and considered as independent during the time the business was negotiating. But this was not the view of England. She wanted to draw France from the war, that she might uninterruptedly pour out all her force and fury upon America; and being disappointed in this plan, as well through the open and generous conduct of Spain, as the determination of France, she refused the mediation which she had solicited.

I shall now give some extracts from the justifying memorial of the Spanish court, in which she has set the conduct and character of Britain, with respect to America, in a clear and striking point of light.

The memorial, speaking of the refusal of the British court to meet in conference, with commissioners from

the United States, who were to be considered as independent during the time of the conference, says:

"It is a thing very extraordinary and even ridiculous, that the court of London, who treats the colonies as independent, not only in acting, but of right, during the war, should have a repugnance to treat them as such only in acting during truce, or suspension of hostilities. The convention of Saratoga; the reputing General Burgoyne as a lawful prisoner, in order to suspend his trial; the exchange and liberation of other prisoners made from the colonies; the having named commissioners to go and supplicate the Americans, at their own doors, request peace of them, and treat with them and the Congress: and, finally, by a thousand other acts of this sort, authorized by the court of London, which have been, and are true signs of the acknowledgment of their independence.

"In aggravation of all the foregoing, at the same time the British cabinet answered the king of Spain in the terms already mentioned, they were insinuating themselves at the court of France by means of secret emissaries, and making very great offers to her to abandon the colonies and make peace with England. But there is yet more; for at this same time the English ministry were treating, by means of another certain emissary, with Dr. Franklin, minister plenipotentiary from the colonies, residing at Paris, to whom they made various proposals to disunite them from France, and accommodate matters with England.

"From what has been observed, it evidently follows, that the whole of the British politics was, to disunite the two courts of Paris and Madrid, by means of the suggestions and offers she separately made to them; and also to separate the colonies from their treaties and engagements entered into with France, and induce them to arm against the house of Bourbon, or *more probably to oppress them*

when they found, from breaking their engagements, that they stood alone and without protection.

"This, therefore, is the net they laid for the American states; that is to say, to tempt them with flattering and very magnificent promises to come to an accommodation with them, exclusive of any intervention of Spain or France, that the British ministry might always remain the arbiters of the fate of the colonies.

"But the Catholic king (the king of Spain) faithful on the one part of the engagements which bind him to the most Christian king (the king of France) his nephew; just and upright on the other to his own subjects, whom he ought to protect and guard against so many insults; and finally, full of humanity and compassion for the Americans and other individuals who suffer in the present war; he is determined to pursue and prosecute it, and to make all the efforts in his power, until he can obtain a solid and permanent peace, with full and satisfactory securities that it shall be observed."

Thus far the memorial, a translation of which into English, may be seen in full, under the head of State Papers, in the Annual Register for 1779, page 367.

The extracts I have here given, serve to show the various endeavors and contrivances of the enemy to draw France from her connection with America, and to prevail on her to make a separate peace with England, leaving America totally out of the question, and at the mercy of a merciless, unprincipled enemy. The opinion, likewise, which Spain has formed of the British cabinet character, for meanness and perfidiousness, is so exactly the opinion of America respecting it, that the memorial, in this instance, contains our own sentiments and language; for people, however remote, who think alike will unavoidably speak alike.

Thus we see the insidious use which Britain endeavored to make of the propositions for peace under the

mediation of Spain. I shall now proceed to the second proposition under the mediation of the emperor of Germany and the empress of Russia; the general outline of which was, that a congress of the several powers at war should meet at Vienna, in 1781, to settle preliminaries of peace.

I could wish myself at liberty to make use of all the information I am possessed of on this subject, but as there is a delicacy in the matter, I do not conceive it prudent, at least at present, to make references and quotations in the same manner as I have done with respect to the mediation of Spain, who published the whole proceedings herself; and therefore, what comes from me, on this part of the business, must rest on my own credit with the public, assuring them, that when the whole proceedings, relative to the proposed congress at Vienna, shall appear, they shall find my account not only true but studiously moderate.

We know that at the time this mediation was on the carpet, the expectations of the British king and ministry ran high with respect to the conquest of America. The English packet which was taken with the mail on board, and carried into l'Orient in France, contained letters from Lord G. Germaine to Sir Henry Clinton, which expressed in the fullest terms the ministerial idea of a total conquest. Copies of those letters were sent to Congress and published in the newspapers of last year. Colonel Laurens brought over the originals, some of which, signed in the handwriting of the then secretary, Germaine, are now in my possession.

Filled with these high ideas, nothing could be more insolent towards America than the language of the British court on the proposed mediation. A peace with France and Spain she anxiously solicited; but America, as before, was to be left to her mercy, neither would she hear any proposition for admitting an agent from the United States into the Congress of Vienna.

On the other hand, France, with an open, noble and manly determination, and the fidelity of a good ally, would hear no proposition for a separate peace, nor even meet in Congress at Vienna, without an agent from America : and likewise, that the independent character of the United States, represented by the agent, should be fully and unequivocally defined and settled before any conference should be entered on. The reasoning of the court of France on the several propositions of the two Imperial courts, which relate to us, is rather in the style of an American than an ally, and she advocated the cause of America as if she had been America herself.— Thus the second mediation, like the first, proved ineffectual.

But since that time a reverse of fortune has overtaken the British arms, and all their high expectations are dashed to the ground. The noble exertions to the southward under General Greene ; the successful operations of the allied arms in the Chesapeake ; the loss of most of their islands in the West Indies and of Minorca in the Mediterranean ; the persevering spirit of Spain against Gibraltar ; the expected capture of Jamaica ; the failure of making a separate peace with Holland, and the expense of an hundred millions sterling, by which all these fine losses were obtained, have read them a loud lesson of disgraceful misfortune, and necessity has called on them to change their ground.

In this situation of confusion and despair their present councils have no fixed character. It is now the hurricane months of British politics. Every day seems to have a storm of its own, and they are scudding under the bare poles of hope. Beaten, but not humble ; condemned, but not penitent ; they act like men trembling at fate and catching at a straw. From this convulsion in the entrails of their politics, it is more than probable that the mountain, groaning in labor, will bring forth a

mouse as to its size, and a monster in its make. They will try on America the same insidious arts they tried on France and Spain.

We sometimes experience sensations to which language is not equal. The conception is too bulky to be born alive, and in the torture of thinking we stand dumb. Our feelings, imprisoned by their magnitude, find no way out—and, in the struggle of expression every finger tries to be a tongue. The machinery of the body seems too little for the mind, and we look about for helps to show our thoughts by. Such must be the sensation of America, whenever Britain, teeming with corruption, shall propose to her to sacrifice her faith.

But, exclusive of the wickedness, there is a personal offence contained in every such attempt. It is calling us villains; for no man asks another to act the villain unless he believes him inclined to be one. No man attempts to seduce a truly honest woman. It is the supposed looseness of her mind that starts the thoughts of seduction, and he who offers it calls her a prostitute. Our pride is always hurt by the same propositions which offend our principles; for when we are shocked at the crime we are wounded by the suspicion of our compliance.

Could I convey a thought that might serve to regulate the public mind, I would not make the interest of the alliance the basis of defending it. All the world are moved by interest, and it affords them nothing to boast of. But I would go a step higher, and defend it on the ground of honor and principle. That our public affairs have flourished under the alliance—that it was wisely made and has been nobly executed—that by its assistance we are enabled to preserve our country from conquest and expel those who sought our destruction—that it is our true interest to maintain it unimpaired, and that while we do so no enemy can conquer us,—are matters

which experience has taught us, and the common good of ourselves, abstracted from principles of faith and honor, would lead us to maintain the connection.

But over and above the mere letter of the alliance, we have been nobly and generously treated, and have had the same respect and attention paid us, as if we had been an old established country. To oblige and be obliged is fair work among mankind, and we want an opportunity of showing to the world that we are a people sensible of kindness and worthy of confidence.

Character is to us, in our present circumstances, of more importance than interest. We are a young nation, just stepping upon the stage of public life, and the eye of the world is upon us to see how we act. We have an enemy who is watching to destroy our reputation, and who will go any length to gain some evidence against us, that may serve to render our conduct suspected, and our character odious; because, could she accomplish this, wicked as it is, the world would withdraw from us, as from a people not to be trusted, and our task would then become difficult.

There is nothing which sets the character of a nation in a higher or lower light with others, than the faithfully fulfilling, or perfidiously breaking of treaties. They are things not to be tampered with; and should Britain, which seems very probable, propose to seduce America into such an act of baseness, it would merit from her some mark of unusual detestation. It is one of those extraordinary instances in which we ought not to be contented with the bare negative of Congress, because it is an affront on the multitude as well as on the government. It goes on the supposition that the public are not honest men, and that they may be managed by contrivance, though they cannot be conquered by arms. But, let the world and Britain know, that we are neither to be bought nor sold. That our mind is great and fixed; our pros-

pect clear; and that we will support our character as firmly as our independence.

But I will go still further: General Conway, who made the motion in the British parliament, for discontinuing *offensive* war in America, is a gentleman of an amiable character. We have no personal quarrel with him. But he feels not as we feel; he is not in our situation, and that alone, without any other explanation, is enough.

The British parliament suppose they have many friends in America, and that when all chance of conquest is over, they will be able to draw her from her alliance with France. Now, if I have any conception of the human heart, they will fail in this more than in anything they have yet tried.

This part of the business is not a question of policy only, but of honor and honesty; and the proposition will have in it something so visibly low and base that their partisans, if they have any, will be ashamed of it. Men are often hurt by a mean action who are not startled at a wicked one, and this will be such a confession of inability, such a declaration of servile thinking, that the scandal of it will ruin all their hopes.

In short, we have nothing to do but to go on with vigor and determination. The enemy is yet in our country. They hold New York, Charleston and Savannah, and the very being in those places is an offence, and a part of offensive war, and until they can be driven from them, or captured in them, it would be folly in us to listen to an idle tale. I take it for granted that the British ministry are sinking under the impossibility of carrying on the war. Let them then come to a fair and open peace with France, Spain, Holland and America in the manner they ought to do; but until then we can have nothing to say to them.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, May 22, 1782.

THE CRISIS.

NUMBER XIII.

TO SIR GUY CARLETON.

IT is the nature of compassion to associate with misfortune; and I address this to you in behalf even of an enemy, a captain in the British service, now on his way to the head-quarters of the American army, and unfortunately doomed to death for a crime not his own. A sentence so extraordinary, an execution so repugnant to every human sensation, ought never to be told without the circumstances which produced it; and as the destined victim is yet in existence, and in your hands rest his life or death, I shall briefly state the case, and the melancholy consequence.

Captain Hudd, of the Jersey militia, was attacked in a small fort on Tom's River, by a party of refugees in the British pay and service, was made prisoner, together with his company, carried to New York and lodged in the provost of that city: about three weeks after which, he was taken out of the provost down to the water-side, put into a boat, and brought again upon the Jersey shore; and there, contrary to the practice of all nations but savages, was hung up on a tree, and left hanging till found by our people, who took him down and buried him.

The inhabitants of that part of the country where the murder was committed, sent a deputation to General Washington, with a full and certified statement of the fact. Struck, as every human breast must be, with such brutish outrage, and determined both to punish and prevent it

for the future, the general represented the case to General Clinton, who then commanded, and demanded that the refugee officer who ordered and attended the execution, and whose name is Lippincut, should be delivered up as a murderer; and in case of refusal, that the person of some British officer should suffer in his stead. The demand, though not refused, has not been complied with; and the melancholy lot (not by selection, but by casting lots) has fallen upon Captain Asgill, of the guards, who, as I have already mentioned, is on his way from Lancaster to camp, a martyr to the general wickedness of the cause he engaged in, and the ingratitude of those whom he served.

The first reflection which arises on this black business is, what sort of men must Englishmen be, and what sort of order and discipline do they preserve in their army, when in the immediate place of their head quarters, and under the eye and nose of their commander-in-chief, a prisoner can be taken at pleasure from his confinement, and his death made a matter of sport?

The history of the most savage Indians does not produce instances exactly of this kind. They, at least, have a formality in their punishments. With them it is the horridness of revenge, but with your army it is a still greater crime, the horridness of diversion.

The British generals who have succeeded each other, from the time of General Gage to yourself, have all affected to speak in language that they have no right to. In their proclamations, their addresses, their letters to General Washington, and their supplications to Congress (for they deserve no other name) they talk of British honor, British generosity, and British clemency, as if those things were matters of fact; whereas, we whose eyes are open, who speak the same language with yourselves, many of whom were born on the same spot with you, and who can no more be mistaken in your words

than in your actions, can declare to all the world, that so far as our knowledge goes, there is not a more detestable character, nor a meaner or more barbarous enemy, than the present British one. With us, you have forfeited all pretensions to reputation, and it is only holding you like a wild beast, afraid of your keepers, that you can be made manageable. But to return to the point in question.

Though I can think no man innocent who has lent his hand to destroy the country which he did not plant, and to ruin those that he could not enslave, yet, abstracted from all ideas of right and wrong on the original question, Captain Asgill, in the present case, is not the guilty man. The villain and the victim are here separated characters. You hold the one and we the other. You disown, or affect to disown and reprobate the conduct of Lippincut, yet you give him a sanctuary; and by so doing you as effectually become the executioner of Asgill, as if you had put the rope on his neck, and dismissed him from the world. Whatever your feelings on this extraordinary occasion may be, are best known to yourself. Within the grave of your own mind lies buried the fate of Asgill. He becomes the corpse of your will, or the survivor of your justice. Deliver up the one, and you save the other; withold the one, and the other dies by your choice.

On our part the case is exceedingly plain; *an officer has been taken from his confinement and murdered, and the murderer is within your lines.* Your army has been guilty of a thousand instances of equal cruelty, but they have been rendered equivocal, and sheltered from personal detection. Here the crime is fixed; and is one of those extraordinary cases which can neither be denied nor palliated, and to which the custom of war does not apply; for it never could be supposed that such a brutal outrage would ever be committed. It is an original in the history of civilized barbarians, and it is truly British.

On your part you are accountable to us for the personal safety of the prisoners within your walls. Here can be no mistake; they can neither be spies nor suspected as such; your security is not endangered, nor your operations subjected to miscarriage, by men immured within a dungeon. They differ in every circumstance from men in the field, and leave no pretence for severity of punishment. But if to the dismal condition of captivity with you, must be added the constant apprehension of death; if to be imprisoned is so nearly to be entombed; and, if after all, the murderers are to be protected, and thereby the crime encouraged, wherein do you differ from Indians, either in conduct or character?

We can have no idea of your honor or your justice, in any future transaction, of whatever nature it may be, while you shelter within your lines an outrageous murderer, and sacrifice in his stead an officer of your own. If you have no regard to us, at least spare the blood which it is your duty to save. Whether the punishment will be greater on him, who, in this case, innocently dies, or on him whom sad necessity forces to retaliate, is, in the nicety of sensation, an undecided question? It rests with you to prevent the sufferings of both. You have nothing to do but to give up the murderer, and the matter ends.

But to protect him, be he who he may, is to patronize his crime, and to trifle it off by frivolous and unmeaning inquiries, is to promote it. There is no declaration you can make nor promise you can give, that will obtain credit. It is the man and not the apology that is demanded.

You see yourself pressed on all sides to spare the life of your own officer, for die he will if you withold justice. The murder of Captain Huddy is an offence not to be borne with, and there is no security we can have that such actions or similar ones shall not be repeated, but by making the punishment fall upon yourselves

To destroy the last security of captivity, and to take the unarmed, the unresisting prisoner to private and sportive execution, is carrying barbarity too high for silence. The evil *must* be put an end to; and the choice of persons rests with you. But if your attachment to the guilty is stronger than to the innocent, you invent a crime that must destroy your character, and if the cause of your king needs to be so supported, for ever cease, sir, to torture our remembrance with the wretched phrases of British honor, British generosity, and British clemency.

From this melancholy circumstance, learn, sir, a lesson of morality. The refugees are men whom your predecessors have instructed in wickedness, the better to fit them to their master's purpose. To make them useful, they have made them vile, and the consequence of their tutored villainy is now descending on the heads of their encouragers. They have been trained like hounds to the scent of blood, and cherished in every species of dissolute barbarity. Their ideas of right and wrong are worn away in the constant habitude of repeated infamy, till, like men practised in executions, they feel not the value of another's life.

The task before you, though painful, is not difficult; give up the murderer, and save your officer, as the first outset of a necessary reformation.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, May 31, 1782.

THE CRISIS.

NUMBER XIV.

TO THE EARL OF SHELBURNE.

MY LORD,—A speech, which has been printed in several of the British and New York newspapers as coming from your lordship, in answer to one from the Duke of Richmond of the 10th of July last, contains expressions and opinions so new and singular, and so enveloped in mysterious reasoning, that I address this publication to you, for the purpose of giving them a free and candid examination. The speech that I allude to is in these words:

"His lordship said, it had been mentioned in another place, that he had been guilty of inconsistency. To clear himself of this, he asserted that he still held the same principles in respect to American independence which he at first imbibed. He had been, and yet was of opinion, whenever the parliament of Great Britain acknowledges that point, the sun of England's glory is set forever. Such were the sentiments he possessed on a former day, and such the sentiments he continued to hold at this hour. It was the opinion of Lord Chatham, as well as many other able statesmen. Other noble lords however, think differently; and as the majority of the cabinet support them, he acquiesced in the measure, dissenting from the idea; and the point is settled for bringing the matter into the full discussion of parliament, where it will be candidly, fairly, and impartially debated. The independence of America would end in the ruin of England; and that a peace patched up with France, would give that proud enemy the means of yet trampling on this

country. The sun of England's glory he wished not to see set forever; he looked for a spark at least to be left, which might in time light us up to a new day. But if independence was to be granted, if parliament deemed that measure prudent, he forsaw, in his own mind, that England was undone. He wished to God that he had been deputed to Congress, that he might plead the cause of that country as well as of this, and that he might exercise whatever powers he possessed as an orator, to save both from ruin, by striving to convince Congress that, if their independence was signed, their liberties were gone forever.

"Peace, his lordship added, was a desirable object, but it must be an honorable peace, and not a humiliating one, dictated by France or insisted on by America. It was very true, that this kingdom was not in a flourishing state; it was impoverished by war. But if we were not rich, it was evident that France was poor. If we were straitened in our finances, the enemy were exhausted in their resources. This was a great empire; it abounded with brave men, who were able and willing to fight in a common cause; the language of humiliation should not, therefore, be the language of Great Britain. His lordship said, that he was not afraid nor ashamed of those expressions going to America. There were numbers, great numbers there, who were of the same way of thinking in respect to that country being dependent on this, and who, with his lordship, perceived ruin and independence linked together."

Thus far the speech; on which I remark — That his lordship is a total stranger to the mind and sentiments of America; that he has wrapped himself up in a fond delusion, that something less than independence may, under his administration, be accepted; and he wishes himself sent to Congress, to prove the most extraordinary of all doctrines, which is, that *independence*, the sublimest of all human conditions, is loss of liberty.

In answer to which we may say, that in order to know

what the contrary word *dependance* means, we have only to look back to those years of severe humiliation, when the mildest of all petitions could obtain no other notice than the haughtiest of all insults; and when the base terms of unconditional submission were demanded, or undistinguishable destruction threatened. It is nothing to us that the ministry have been changed, for they may be changed again. The guilt of a government is the crime of a whole country; and the nation that can, though but for a moment, think and act as England has done, can never afterwards be believed or trusted. There are cases in which it is as impossible to restore character to life, as it is to recover the dead. It is a phœnix that can expire but once, and from whose ashes there is no resurrection. Some offences are of such a slight composition, that they reach no further than the temper, and are created or cured by a thought. But the sin of England has struck the heart of America, and nature has not left it in our power to say we can forgive.

Your lordship wishes for an opportunity to plead before Congress *the cause of England and America, and to save*, as you say, *both from ruin.*

That the country, which for more than seven years has sought our destruction, should now cringe to solicit our protection, is adding the wretchedness of disgrace to the misery of disappointment; and if England has the least spark of supposed honor left, that spark must be darkened by asking, and extinguished by receiving, the smallest favor from America; for the criminal who owes his life to the grace and mercy of the injured, is more executed by living than he who dies.

But a thousand pleadings, even from your lordship, can have no effect. Honor, interest, and every sensation of the heart, would plead against you. We are a people who think not as you think; and what is equally true, you cannot feel as we feel. The situations of the two countries are ex-

ceedingly different. Ours has been the seat of war; yours has seen nothing of it. The most wanton destruction has been committed in our sight; the most insolent barbarity has been acted on our feelings. We can look round and see the remains of burnt and destroyed houses, once the fair fruit of hard industry, and now the striking monuments of British brutality. We walk over the dead whom we loved, in every part of America, and remember by whom they fell. There is scarcely a village but brings to life some melancholy thought, and reminds us of what we have suffered, and of those we have lost by the inhumanity of Britain. A thousand images arise to us, which, from situation, you cannot see, and are accompanied by as many ideas which you cannot know; and therefore your supposed system of reasoning would apply to nothing, and all your expectations die of themselves.

The question whether England shall accede to the independence of America, and which your lordship says is to undergo a parliamentary discussion, is so very simple, and composed of so few cases, that it scarcely needs a debate.

It is the only way out of an expensive and ruinous war, which has no object, and without which acknowledgment there can be no peace.

But your lordship says, "*the sun of Great Britain will set whenever she acknowledges the independence of America.*"—Whereas the metaphor would have been strictly just, to have left the sun wholly out of the figure, and have ascribed her not acknowledging it to the influence of the moon.

But the expression, if true, is the greatest confession of disgrace that could be made, and furnishes America with the highest notions of sovereign independent importance. Mr. Wedderburne, about the year 1776, made use of an idea of much the same kind,—"*Relinquish America!*" says he—"*What is it but to desire a giant to shrink spontaneously into a dwarf.*"

Alas! are those people, who call themselves Englishmen, of so little internal consequence, that when America is gone or shuts her eyes upon them, their sun is set, they can shine no more, but grope about in obscurity, and contract into insignificant animals? Was America, then, the giant of the empire, and England only her dwarf in waiting? Is the case so strangely altered, that those who once thought we could not live without them, are now brought to declare that they cannot exist without us? Will they tell to the world, and that from their first minister of state, that America is their all in all; that it is by her importance only they can live, and breathe, and have a being? Will they, who long since threatened to bring us to their feet, bow themselves at ours, and own that without us they are not a nation? Are they become so unqualified to debate on independence, that they have lost all idea of it themselves, and are calling to the rocks and mountains of America to cover their insignificance? Or, if America is lost, is it manly to sob over it like a child for its rattle, and invite the laughter of the world by declarations of disgrace? Surely, the more consistent conduct would be to bear it without complaint; and to show that England, without America, can preserve her independence, and a suitable rank with other European powers. You were not contented while you had her, and to weep for her now is childish.

But Lord Shelburne thinks something may yet be done. What that something is, or how it is to be accomplished, is a matter in obscurity. By arms there is no hope. The experience of nearly eight years, with the expense of 100,000,000 pounds sterling, and the loss of two armies, must positively decide that point. Besides, the British have lost their interest in America with the disaffected. Every part of it has been tried. There is no new scene left for delusion: and the thousands who have been ruined by adhering to them, and have now to quit the

settlements they had acquired, and be conveyed like transports to cultivate the deserts of Augustine and Nova Scotia, has put an end to all further expectations of aid.

If you cast your eyes on the people of England, what have they to console themselves with for the millions expended? Or what encouragement is there left to continue throwing good money after bad? America can carry on the war for ten years longer, and all the charges of government included, for less than you can defray the charges of war and government for one year. And I, who know both countries, know well, that the people of America can afford to pay their share of the expense much better than the people of England can. Besides, it is their own estates and property, their own rights, liberties and government, they are defending; and were they not to do it, they would deserve to lose all, and none would pity them. The fault would be their own, and their punishment just.

The British army in America care not how long the war lasts. They enjoy an easy and indolent life. They fatten on the folly of one country and the spoils of another; and, between their plunder and their pay, may go home rich. But the case is very different with the laboring farmer, the working tradesman, and the necessitous poor in England, the sweat of whose brow goes day after day to feed, in prodigality and sloth, the army that is robbing both them and us. Removed from the eye of the country that supports them, and distant from the government that employs them, they cut and carve for themselves, and there is none to call them to account.

But England will be ruined, says Lord Shelburne, if America is independent.

Then, I say, is England already ruined, for America is already independent: and if Lord Shelburne will not allow this, he immediately denies the fact which he infers. Besides, to make England the mere creature of

America, is paying too great a compliment to us, and too little to himself.

But the declaration is a rhapsody of inconsistency. For to say, as Lord Shelburne has numberless times said, that the war against America is ruinous, and yet to continue the prosecution of that ruinous war for the purpose of avoiding ruin, is a language which cannot be understood. Neither is it possible to see how the independence of America is to accomplish the ruin of England after the war is over, and yet not affect it before. America cannot be more independent of her, nor a greater enemy to her, hereafter than she now is; nor can England derive less advantages from her than at present. Why then is ruin to follow in the best state of the case, and not in the worst? And if not in the worst, why is it to follow at all?

That a nation is to be ruined by peace and commerce, and fourteen or fifteen millions a year less expenses than before, is a new doctrine in politics. We have heard much clamor of national savings and economy; but surely the true economy would be, to save the whole charge of a silly, foolish, and headstrong war; because, compared with this, all other retrenchments are baubles and trifles.

But is it possible that Lord Shelburne can be serious in supposing the least advantage can be obtained by arms, or that any advantage can be equal to the expense or the danger of attempting it? Will not the capture of one army after another satisfy him; must all become prisoners? Must England ever be the sport of hope and the victim of delusion? Sometimes, our currency was to fail; another time, our army was to disband: then, whole provinces were to revolt. Such a general said this and that; another wrote so and so; Lord Chatham was of this opinion; and Lord somebody else of another. To-day, 20,000 Russians and 20 Russian ships of the line were to come; to-morrow, the empress was abused without mercy or decency. Then the em-

peror of Germany was to be bribed with a million of money, and the king of Prussia was to do wonderful things. At one time it was, Lo here! and then it was, Lo there! Sometimes this power, and sometimes that power, was to engage in the war, just as if the whole world was as mad and foolish as Britain. And thus, from year to year, has every straw been catched at, and every Will-with-a-wisp led them a new dance.

This year a still newer folly is to take place. Lord Shelburne wishes to be sent to Congress, and he thinks that something may be done.

Are not the repeated declarations of Congress, and which all America supports, that they will not even hear any proposals whatever, until the unconditional and unequivocal independence of America is recognized; are not, I say, these declarations answer enough?

But for England to receive anything from America now, after so many insults, injuries and outrages acted towards us, would show such a spirit of meanness in her, that we could not but despise her for accepting it. And so far from Lord Shelburne coming here to solicit it, it would be the greatest disgrace we could do them to offer it. England would appear a wretch indeed, at this time of day, to ask or owe anything to the bounty of America. Has not the name of Englishman blots enough upon it, without inventing more? Even Lucifer would scorn to reign in heaven by permission, and yet an Englishman can creep for only an entrance into America. Or, has a land of liberty so many charms, that to be a door-keeper in it is better than to be an English minister of state?

But what can this expected something be? Or, if obtained, what can it amount to, but new disgraces, contentions and quarrels? The people of America have for years accustomed themselves to think and speak so freely and contemptuously of English authority, and the inveteracy is so deeply rooted, that a person invested

with any authority from that country, and attempting to exercise it here, would have the life of a toad under a harrow. They would look upon him as an interloper, to whom their compassion permitted a residence. He would be no more than the Mungo of a farce ; and if he disliked that, he must set off. It would be a station of degradation, debased by our pity, and despised by our pride, and would place England in a more contemptible situation than any she has yet suffered by the war. We have too high an opinion of ourselves, ever to think of yielding again the least obedience to outlandish authority ; and for a thousand reasons, England would be the last country in the world to yield it to. She has been treacherous, and we know it. Her character is gone, and we have seen the funeral.

Surely she loves to fish in troubled waters, and drink the cup of contention, or she would not now think of mingling her affairs with those of America. It would be like a foolish dotard taking to his arms the bride that despises him, or who has placed on his head the ensigns of her disgust. It is kissing the hand that boxes his ears, and proposing to renew the exchange. The thought is as servile as the war is wicked, and shows the last scene of the drama as inconsistent as the first.

As America is gone, the only act of manhood is to *let her go.* Your lordship had no hand in the separation, and you will gain no honor by temporizing politics. Besides, there is something so exceedingly whimsical, unsteady, and even insincere in the present conduct of England, that she exhibits herself in the most dishonorable colors.

On the 2nd of August last General Carlton and Admiral Digby wrote to General Washington in these words :

" The resolution of the House of Commons of the 27th of February last, has been placed in your excellency's hands, and intimations given at the same time that further pacific measures were likely to follow. Since

which, until the present time, we have had no direct communications from England; but a mail is now arrived, which brings us very important information. We are acquainted, sir, *by authority*, that negotiations for a general peace have already commenced at Paris, and that Mr. Grenville is invested with full powers to treat with all the parties at war, and is now at Paris in the execution of his commission. And we are further, sir, made acquainted, *that his majesty, in order to remove any obstacles to that peace which he so ardently wishes to restore, has commanded his ministers to direct Mr. Grenville, that the independence of the Thirteen United Provinces, should be proposed by him in the first instance, instead of making it a condition of a general treaty.*"

Now, taking your present measures into view, and comparing them with the declaration in this letter, pray, what is the word of your king, or his ministers, or the parliament good for? Must we not look upon you as a confederated body of faithless, treacherous men, whose assurances are fraud, and their language deceit? What opinion can we possibly form of you, but that you are a lost, abandoned, profligate nation, who sport even with your own character, and are to be held by nothing but the bayonet or the halter?

To say, after this, *that the sun of Great Britain will be set whenever she acknowledges the independence of America*, when the not doing it is the unqualified lie of government, can be no other than the language of ridicule, the jargon of inconsistency. There were thousands in America who predicted the delusion, and looked upon it as a trick of treachery, to take us from our guard, and draw off our attention from the only system of finance, by which we can be called, or deserve to be called, a sovereign, independent people. The fraud, on your part, might be worth attempting, but the sacrifice to obtain it is too high.

There are others who credited the assurance, because

they thought it impossible that men who had their characters to establish, would begin it with a lie. The prosecution of the war by the former ministry was savage and horrid ; since which it has been mean, trickish, and delusive. The one went greedily into the passion of revenge, the other into the subtleties of low contrivance ; till, between the crimes of both, there is scarcely left a man in America, be he whig or tory, who does not despise or detest the conduct of Britain.

The management of Lord Shelburne, whatever may be his views, is a caution to us, and must be to the world, never to regard British assurances. A perfidy so notorious cannot be hid. It stands even in the public papers of New York, with the names of Carlton and Digby affixed to it. It is a proclamation that the king of England is not to be believed : that the spirit of lying is the governing principle of the ministry. It is holding up the character of the House of Commons to public infamy, and warning all men not to credit them. Such are the consequences which Lord Shelburne's management has brought upon his country.

After the authorized declarations contained in Carlton and Digby's letter, you ought, from every motive of honor, policy, and prudence, to have fulfilled them, whatever might have been the event. It was the least atonement you could possibly make to America, and the greatest kindness you could do to yourselves ; for you will save millions by a general peace, and you will lose as many by continuing the war.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, October 29, 1782.

P. S.—The manuscript copy of this letter is sent your lordship, by the way of our head-quarters, to New York, inclosing a late pamphlet of mine, addressed to the Abbé Raynal, which will serve to give your lordship some idea of the principles and sentiments of America. C. S.

THE CRISIS.

NUMBER XV.

"THE times that tried men's souls,"* are over—and the greatest and completest revolution the world ever knew, is gloriously and happily accomplished.

But to pass from the extremes of danger to safety—from the tumult of war to the tranquillity of peace, though sweet in contemplation, requires a gradual composure of the senses to receive it. Even calmness has the power of stunning, when it opens too instantly upon us. The long and raging hurricane that should cease in a moment, would leave us in a state rather of wonder than enjoyment; and some moments of recollection must pass, before we could be capable of tasting the felecity of repose. There are but few instances, in which the mind is fitted for sudden transitions: it takes in its pleasures by reflection and comparison, and those must have time to act, before the relish for new scenes is complete.

In the present case—the mighty magnitude of the object—the various uncertainties of fate it has undergone—the numerous and complicated dangers we have suffered or escaped—the eminence we now stand on, and the vast prospect before us, must all conspire to impress us with contemplation.

To see it in our power to make a world happy—to teach mankind the art of being so—to exhibit, on the

* "These are the times that try men's souls." *The Crisis* No. 1, published December, 1776.

theatre of the universe, a character hitherto unknown — and to have, as it were, a new creation intrusted to our hands, are honors that command reflection, and can neither be too highly estimated, nor too gratefully received.

In this pause then of recollection — while the storm is ceasing, and the long agitated mind vibrating to a rest, let us look back on the scenes we have passed, and learn from experience what is yet to be done.

Never, I say, had a country so many openings to happiness as this. Her setting out in life, like the rising of a fair morning, was unclouded and promising. Her cause was good. Her principles just and liberal. Her temper serene and firm. Her conduct regulated by the nicest steps, and every thing about her wore the mark of honor. It is not every country (perhaps there is not another in the world) that can boast so fair an origin. Even the first settlement of America corresponds with the character of the revolution. Rome, once the proud mistress of the universe, was originally a band of ruffians. Plunder and rapine made her rich, and her oppression of millions made her great. But America need never be ashamed to tell her birth, nor relate the stages by which she rose to empire.

The remembrance, then, of what is past, if it operates rightly, must inspire her with the most laudable of all ambition, that of adding to the fair fame she began with. The world has seen her great in adversity. Struggling, without a thought of yielding, beneath accumulated difficulties. Bravely, nay proudly, encountering distress, and rising in resolution as the storm increased. All this is justly due to her, for her fortitude has merited the character. Let, then, the world see that she can bear prosperity; and that her honest virtue in time of peace, is equal to the bravest virtue in time of war.

She is now descending to the scenes of quiet and domestic life. Not beneath the cypress shade of disap-

pointment, but to enjoy in her own land, and under her own vine, the sweet of her labors, and the reward of her toil.—In this situation, may she never forget that a fair national reputation is of as much importance as independence. That it possesses a charm that wins upon the world, and makes even enemies civil.—That it gives a dignity which is often superior to power, and commands reverence where pomp and splendor fail.

It would be a circumstance ever to be lamented and never to be forgotten, were a single blot, from any cause whatever, suffered to fall on a revolution, which to the end of time must be an honor to the age that accomplished it: and which has contributed more to enlighten the world, and diffuse a spirit of freedom and liberality among mankind, than any human event (if this may be called one) that ever preceded it.

It is not among the least of the calamities of a long continued war, that it unhinges the mind from those nice sensations which at other times appear so amiable. The continual spectacle of woe blunts the finer feelings, and the necessity of bearing with the sight, renders it familiar. In like manner, are many of the moral obligations of society weakened, till the custom of acting by necessity becomes an apology, where it is truly a crime. Yet let but a nation conceive rightly of its character, and it will be chastely just in protecting it. None ever began with a fairer than America, and none can be under a greater obligation to preserve it.

The debt which America has contracted, compared with the cause she has gained, and the advantages to flow from it, ought scarcely to be mentioned. She has it in her choice to do, and to live as happily as she pleases. The world is in her hands. She has no foreign power to monopolize her commerce, perplex her legislation, or control her prosperity. The struggle is over, which must one day have happened, and, perhaps, never

could have happened at a better time.* And instead of a domineering master, she has gained an *ally*, whose exemplary greatness, and universal liberality, have extorted a confession even from her enemies.

With the blessings of peace, independence, and an universal commerce, the states, individually and collectively, will have leisure and opportunity to regulate and establish their domestic concerns, and to put it beyond the power of calumny to throw the least reflection on their honor. Character is much easier kept than recovered, and that man, if any such there be, who, from sinister views, or littleness of soul, lends unseen his hand to injure it, contrives a wound it will never be in his power to heal.

As we have established an inheritance for posterity, let that inheritance descend, with every mark of an honor-

* That the revolution began at the exact period of time best fitted to the purpose, is sufficiently proved by the event. – But the great hinge on which the whole machine turned, is the *Union of the States:* and this union was naturally produced by the inability of any one state to support itself against any foreign enemy without the assistance of the rest.

Had the states severally been less able than they were when the war began, their united strength would not have been equal to the undertaking, and they must in all human probability have failed. And, on the other hand, had they severally been more able, they might not have seen, or, what is more, might not have felt, the necessity of uniting: and, either by attempting to stand alone or in small confederacies, would have been separately conquered.

Now, as we cannot see a time (and many years must pass away before it can arrive) when the strength of any one state, or several united, can be equal to the whole of the present United States, and as we have seen the extreme difficulty of collectively prosecuting the war to a successful issue, and preserving our national importance in the world, therefore, from the experience we have had, and the knowledge we have gained, we must, unless we make a waste of wisdom, be strongly impressed with the advantage, as well as the necessity of strengthening that happy union which has been our salvation, and without which we should have been a ruined people.

While I was writing this note, I cast my eye on the pamphlet, *Common Sense*, from which I shall make an extract, as it applies exactly to the case. It is as follows:

"I have never met with a man, either in England or America, who hath not confessed it as his opinion that a separation between the countries would take place one time or other; and there is no instance in which we have shown less judgment, than in endeavoring to describe, what we call, the ripeness or fitness of the continent for independence.

"As all men allow the measure, and differ only in their opinion of the time, let us, in order to remove mistakes, take a general survey of things, and endeavor, if possible, to find out the *very time*. But we need not to go far, the inquiry ceases at once, for, *the time hath found us*. The general concurrence, the glorious union of all things prove the fact.

"It is not in numbers, but in a union, that our great strength lies. The continent is just arrived at that pitch of strength, in which no single colony is able to support itself, and the whole, when united, can accomplish the matter; and either more or less than this, might be fatal in its effects."

able conveyance. The little it will cost, compared with the worth of the states, the greatness of the object, and the value of national character, will be a profitable exchange.

But that which must more forcibly strike a thoughtful, penetrating mind, and which includes and renders easy all inferior concerns, is the *Union of the States*. On this our great national character depends. It is this which must give us importance abroad and security at home. It is through this only, that we are, or can be nationally known in the world; it is the flag of the United States which renders our ships and commerce safe on the seas, or in a foreign port. Our Mediterranean passes must be obtained under the same style. All our treaties, whether of alliance, peace or commerce, are formed under the sovereignty of the United States, and Europe knows us by no other name or title.

The division of the empire into states is for our own convenience, but abroad this distinction ceases. The affairs of each state are local. They can go no further than to itself. And were the whole worth of even the richest of them expended in revenue, it would not be sufficient to support sovereignty against a foreign attack. In short, we have no other national sovereignty than as United States. It would even be fatal for us if we had —too expensive to be maintained, and impossible to be supported. Individuals, or individual states, may call themselves what they please; but the world, and especially the world of enemies, is not to be held in awe by the whistling of a name. Sovereignty must have power to protect all the parts that compose and constitute it: and as UNITED STATES we are equal to the importance of the title, but otherwise we are not. Our union, well and wisely regulated and cemented, is the cheapest way of being great—the easiest way of being powerful, and the happiest invention in government which the circumstances of

America can admit of. — Because it collects from each state, that which, by being inadequate, can be of no use to it, and forms an aggregate that serves for all.

The states of Holland are an unfortunate instance of the effects of individual sovereignty. Their disjointed condition exposes them to numerous intrigues, losses, calamities and enemies; and the almost impossibility of bringing their measures to a decision, and that decision into execution, is to them, and would be to us, a source of endless misfortune.

It is with confederated states as with individuals in society; something must be yielded up to make the whole secure. In this view of things we gain by what we give, and draw an annual interest greater than the capital. I ever feel myself hurt when I hear the union, the great palladium of our liberty and safety, the least irreverently spoken of. It is the most sacred thing in the constitution of America, and that which every man should be most proud and tender of. Our citizenship in the United States is our national character. Our citizenship in any particular state is only our local distinction. By the latter we are known at home, by the former to the world. Our great title is AMERICANS — our inferior one varies with the place.

So far as my endeavors could go, they have all been directed to conciliate the affections, unite the interests, and draw and keep the mind of the country together; and the better to assist in this foundation work of the revolution, I have avoided all places of profit or office, either in the state I live in, or in the United States; kept myself at a distance from all parties and party connections, and even disregarded all private and inferior concerns: and when we take into view the great work which we have gone through, and feel, as we ought to feel, the just importance of it, we shall then see, that the little wranglings and indecent contentions of personal parley,

are as dishonorable to our characters, as they are injurious to our repose.

It was the cause of America that made me an author. The force with which it struck my mind, and the dangerous condition the country appeared to me in, by courting an impossible and an unnatural reconciliation with those who were determined to reduce her, instead of striking out into the only line that could cement and save her,—a DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE,—made it impossible for me, feeling as I did, to be silent: and if, in the course of more than seven years, I have rendered her any service, I have likewise added something to the reputation of literature by freel yand disinterestedly employing it in the great cause of mankind, and showing that there may be genius without prostitution.

Independence always appeared to me practicable and probable; provided the sentiment of the country could be formed and held to the object: and there is no instance in the world, where a people so extended, and wedded to former habits of thinking, and under such a variety of circumstances, were so instantly and effectually pervaded, by a turn in politics, as in the case of independence, and who supported their opinion, undiminished, through such a succession of good and ill fortune, till they crowned it with success.

But as the scenes of war are closed, and every man preparing for home and happier times, I therefore take my leave of the subject. I have most sincerely followed it from beginning to end, and through all its turns and windings: and whatever country I may hereafter be in, I shall always feel an honest pride at the part I have taken and acted, and a gratitude to Nature and Providence for putting it in my power to be of some use to mankind.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, April 19, 1783.

THE CRISIS.

NUMBER XVI.

TO THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA.

IN "*Rivington's New York Gazette*," of December 6th, is a publication, under the appearance of a letter from London, dated Sept. 30th; and is on a subject which demands the attention of the United States.

The public will remember, that a treaty of commerce between the United States and England was set on foot last spring, and that until the said treaty could be completed, a bill was brought into the British Parliament, by the then chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. Pitt, to admit and legalize (as the case then required) the commerce of the United States into the British ports and dominions. But neither the one nor the other has been completed. The commercial treaty is broken off, or remains as it began; and the bill in parliament has been thrown aside. And in lieu thereof, a selfish system of English politics has started up, calculated to fetter the commerce of America, by engrossing to England the carrying trade of the American produce to the West India Islands.

Among the advocates for this last measure is Lord Sheffield, a member of the British Parliament, who has published a pamphlet entitled, "*Observations on the Commerce of the American States.*" The pamphlet has two objects; the one is, to allure the Americans to purchase British manufactures; and the other, to spirit up the British Parliament to prohibit the citizens of the United States from trading to the West India Islands.

Viewed in this light, the pamphlet, though in some parts dexterously written, is an absurdity. It offends,

in the very act of endeavoring to ingratiate ; and his lordship, as a politician, ought not to have suffered the two objects to have appeared together. The letter alluded to contains extracts from the pamphlet, with high encomiums on Lord Sheffield, for laboriously endeavoring (as the letter styles it) "to show the mighty advantages of retaining the carrying trade."

Since the publication of this pamphlet in England, the commerce of the United States to the West Indies in American vessels, has been prohibited ; and all intercourse, except in British bottoms, (the property of, and navigated by British subjects), cut off.

That a country has a right to be as foolish as it pleases, has been proved by the practice of England for many years past. In her island situation, sequestered from the world, she forgets that her whispers are heard by other nations ; and in her plans of politics and commerce, she seems not to know, that other votes are necessary besides her own. America would be equally as foolish as Britain, were she to suffer so great a degradation on her flag, and such a stroke on the freedom of her commerce, to pass without a balance.

We admit the right of any nation to prohibit the commerce of another into its own dominions, where there are no treaties to the contrary ; but as this right belongs to one side, as well as the other, there is always a way left to bring avarice and insolence to reason.

But the ground of security which Lord Sheffield has chosen to erect his policy upon, is of a nature which ought, and I think must awaken, in every American, a just and strong sense of national dignity. Lord Sheffield appears to be sensible, that in advising the British nation and parliament to engross to themselves so great a part of the carrying trade of America, he is attempting a measure which cannot succeed, if the politics of the United States be properly directed to counteract the assumption. But, says he, in his pamphlet, "*It will be a*

long time before the American States can be brought to act as a nation, neither are they to be feared as such by us."

What is this more or less than to tell us, that while we have no national system of commerce, the British will govern our trade by their own laws and proclamations as they please. The quotation discloses a truth too serious to be overlooked, and too mischievous not to be remedied.

Among other circumstances which led them to this discovery, none could operate so effectually, as the injudicious, uncandid and indecent opposition made by sundry persons in a certain state, to the recommendations of Congress last winter, for an import duty of five per cent. It could not but explain to the British a weakness in the national power of America, and encourage them to attempt restrictions on her trade, which otherwise they would not have dared to hazard. Neither is there any state in the union, whose policy was more misdirected to its interest than the state I allude to, because her principal support is the carrying trade, which Britain, induced by the want of a well-centered power in the United States to protect and secure, is now attempting to take away. It fortunately happened (and to no state in the union more than the state in question) that the terms of peace were agreed on before the opposition appeared, otherwise, there needs not a doubt, that if the same idea of the diminished authority of America had occurred to them at that time as has occurred to them since, but they would have made the same grasp at the fisheries, as they have done at the carrying trade.

It is surprising that an authority which can be supported with so much ease, and so little expense, and capable of such extensive advantages to the country, should be cavilled at by those whose duty it is to watch over it, and whose existence as a people depends upon it. But this, perhaps, will ever be the case, till some misfortune awakens us into reason, and the instance now before us is but a gentle beginning of what America must expect, un-

less she guards her union with nicer care and stricter honor. United, she is formidable, and that with the least possible charge a nation can be so. Separated, she is a medley of individual nothings, subject to the sport of foreign nations.

It is very probable that the ingenuity of commerce may have found out a method to evade and supersede the intentions of the British, in interdicting the trade with the West India Islands. The language of both being the same, and their customs well understood, the vessels of one country may, by deception, pass for those of another. But this would be a practice too debasing for a sovereign people to stoop to, and too profligate not to be discountenanced. An illicit trade, under any shape it can be placed, cannot be carried on without a violation of truth. America is now sovereign and independent, and ought to act all her affairs in a regular style of character. She has the same right to say that no British vessel shall enter her ports, or that no British manufactures shall be imported but in American bottoms, the property of, and navigated by American subjects, as Britain has to say the same thing respecting the West Indies. Or she may lay a duty of ten, fifteen or twenty shillings per ton (exclusive of other duties) on every British vessel coming from any port of the West Indies, where she is not admitted to trade, the said tonnage to continue as long on her side as the prohibition continues on the other.

But it is only by acting in union, that the usurpations of foreign nations on the freedom of trade can be counteracted, and security extended to the commerce of America. And when we view a flag, which to the eye is beautiful, and to contemplate its rise and origin inspires a sensation of sublime delight, our national honor must unite with our interest to prevent injury to the one, or insult to the other.

COMMON SENSE.

New York, December 9, 1783.

A LETTER

ADDRESSED TO THE

ABBÉ RAYNAL,

ON THE AFFAIRS OF NORTH AMERICA, IN WHICH

THE MISTAKES IN THE ABBÉ'S ACCOUNT

OF THE

REVOLUTION OF AMERICA

ARE CORRECTED AND CLEARED UP.

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

A LONDON translation of an original work in French by the Abbé Raynal, which treats of the revolution of North America, having been re-printed in Philadelphia and other parts of the continent, and as the distance at which the Abbé is placed from the American theatre of war and politics, has occasioned him to mistake several facts, or misconceive the causes or principles by which they were produced, the following tract, therefore, is published with a view to rectify them, and prevent even accidental errors from intermixing with history, under the sanction of time and silence.

The editor of the London edition has entitled it, "*The Revolution of America*, by the ABBÉ RAYNAL," and the American printers have followed the example. But I have understood, and I believe my information just, that the piece, which is more properly reflections on the revolution, was unfairly purloined from the printer whom the Abbé employed, or from the manuscript copy, and is only part of a larger work then in the press, or preparing for it. The person who procured it, appears to have been an Englishman, and though, in an advertisement prefixed to the London edition, he has endeavored to gloss over the embezzlement with professions of patriotism, and to soften it with high encomiums on the author, yet the action in any view in which it can be placed, is illiberal and unpardonable.

"In the course of his travels," says he, "the translator happily succeeded in obtaining a copy of this exquisite little piece which has not yet made its appearance from any press. He publishes a French edition, in favor of those who feel its eloquent reasoning more forcibly in its native language, at the same time with the following translation of it; in which he has been desirous, perhaps in vain, that all the warmth, the grace, the strength, the dignity of the original, should not be lost. And he flatters himself, that the indulgence of the illustrious historian will not be wanting to a man, who, of his own motion, has taken the liberty to give this composition to the public, only from the strong persuasion, that its momentous argument will be useful in a critical conjuncture to that country which he loves with an ardor, that can be exceeded only by the nobler flame which burns in the bosom of the philanthropic author, for the freedom and happiness of all the countries upon earth."

This plausibility of setting off a dishonorable action, may pass for patriotism and sound principles with those who do not enter into its demerits, and whose interest is not injured nor their happiness affected thereby. But it is more than probable, notwithstanding the declarations it contains, that the copy was obtained for the sake of profiting by the sale of a new and popular work, and that the professions are but a garb to the fraud.

It may with propriety be remarked, that in all countries where literature is protected, and it never can flourish where it is not, the works of an author are his legal property; and to treat letters in any other light than this, is to banish them from the country, or strangle them in the birth.—The embezzlement from the Abbé Raynal, was, it is true, committed by one country upon another, and therefore shows no defect in the laws of either. But it is nevertheless a breach of civil manners and literary justice: neither can it be any apology, that

because the countries are at war, literature shall be entitled to depredation.*

But the forestalling the Abbé's publication by London editions, both in French and English, and thereby not only defrauding him and throwing an expensive publication on his hands by anticipating the sale, are only the smaller injuries which such conduct may occasion. A man's opinions, whether written or in thought, are his own, until he pleases to publish them himself; and it is adding cruelty to injustice, to make him the author of what future reflection, or better information, might occasion him to suppress or amend. There are declarations and sentiments in the Abbé's piece which, for my own part, I did not expect to find, and such as himself, on a revisal, might have seen occasion to change; but the anticipated piracy effectually prevented his having the opportunity, and precipitated him into difficulties, which, had it not been for such ungenerous fraud, might not have happened.

This mode of making an author appear before his time, will appear still more ungenerous, when we consider how very few men there are in any country, who can at once, and without the aid of reflection and revisal, combine warm passions with a cool temper, and the full expansion of the imagination with the natural and necessary gravity of judgment, so as to be rightly balanced within themselves, and to make a reader feel, fancy, and understand justly at the same time. To call three powers of the mind into action at once, in a manner that neither

* The state of literature in America must one day become a subject of legislative consideration. Hitherto it hath been a disinterested volunteer in the service of the revolution and no man thought of profits: but when peace shall give time and opportunity for study, the country will deprive itself of the honor and service of letters and the improvement of science, unless sufficient laws are made to prevent depredations on literary property. It is well worth remarking, that Russia, who but a few years ago was scarcely known in Europe, owes a large share of her present greatness to the close attention she has paid, and the wise encouragement she has given, to every branch of science and learning: and we have almost the same instance in France, in the reign of Louis XIV.

shall interrupt, and that each shall aid and invigorate the other, is a talent very rarely possessed.

It often happens that the weight of an argument is lost by the wit of setting it off; or the judgment disordered by an intemperate irritation of the passions: yet a certain degree of animation must be felt by the writer, and raised in the reader, in order to interest the attention; and a sufficient scope given to the imagination, to enable it to create in the mind a sight of the persons, characters and circumstances of the subject: for without these, the judgment will feel little or no excitement to action, and its determinations will be cold, sluggish, and imperfect. But if either or both of the two former are raised too high, or heated too much, the judgment will be jostled from its seat, and the whole matter, however important in itself, will diminish into a pantomime of the mind, in which we create images that promote no other purpose than amusement.

The Abbé's writings bear evident marks of that extension and rapidness of thinking and quickness of sensation, which of all others require revisal, and the more particularly so, when applied to the living characters of nations or individuals in a state of war. The least misinformation or misconception leads to some wrong conclusion, and an error believed, becomes the progenitor of others. And, as the Abbé has suffered some inconveniences in France, by misstating certain circumstances of the war, and the characters of the parties therein, it becomes some apology for him that those errors were precipitated into the world by the avarice of an ungenerous enemy.

LETTER TO THE ABBÉ RAYNAL.

TO an author of such distinguished reputation as the Abbé Raynal, it might very well become me to apologize for the present undertaking; but, as *to be right* is the first wish of philosophy, and the first principle of history, he will, I presume, accept from me a declaration of my motives, which are those of doing justice, in preference to any complimental apology I might otherwise make. The Abbé, in the course of his work, has, in some instances, extolled without a reason and wounded without a cause. He has given fame where it was not deserved, and withheld it where it was justly due; and appears to be so frequently in and out of temper with his subjects and parties, that few or none of them are decisively and uniformly marked.

It is yet too soon to write the history of the revolution, and whoever attempts it precipitately, will unavoidably mistake characters and circumstances, and involve himself in error and difficulty. Things, like men, are seldom understood rightly at first sight. But the Abbé is wrong even in the foundation of his work; that is, he has misconceived and misstated the causes which produced the rupture between England and her then colonies, and which led on, step by step, unstudied and uncontrived on the part of America, to a revolution, which has engaged the attention, and affected the interest of Europe.

To prove this, I shall bring forward a passage, which, though placed towards the latter part of the Abbé's work,

is more intimately connected with the beginning; and in which, speaking of the original cause of the dispute, he declares himself in the following manner:

"None," says he, "of those energetic causes, which have produced so many revolutions upon the globe, existed in North America. Neither religion nor laws had there been outraged. The blood of martyrs or patriots had not there streamed from scaffolds. Morals had not there been insulted. Manners, customs, habits, no object dear to nations, had there been the sport of ridicule. Arbitrary power had not there torn any inhabitant from the arms of his family and friends, to drag him to a dreary dungeon. Public order had not been there inverted. The principles of administration had not been changed there; and the maxims of government had there always remained the same. The whole question was reduced to knowing whether the mother country had, or had not a right to lay, directly or indirectly, a slight tax upon the colonies."

On this extraordinary passage, it may not be improper, in general terms, to remark, that none can feel like those who suffer; and that for a man to be a competent judge of the provocatives, or as the Abbé styles them, the energetic causes of the revolution, he must have resided at the time in America.

The Abbé, in saying that the several particulars he has enumerated, did not exist in America, and neglecting to point out the particular period, in which he means they did not exist, reduces thereby his declaration to a nullity, by taking away all the meaning from the passage.

They did not exist in 1763, and they all existed before 1776; consequently as there was a time when they did *not*, and another, when they *did* exist, the *time when* constitutes the essence of the fact, and not to give it, is to withhold the only evidence which proves the declaration right or wrong, and on which it must stand or fall. But

the declaration as it now appears, unaccompanied by time, has an effect in holding out to the world that there was no real cause for the revolution, because it denies the existence of all those causes which are supposed to be justifiable, and which the Abbé styles energetic.

I confess myself exceedingly at a loss to find out the time to which the Abbé alludes; because, in another part of the work, in speaking of the stamp act, which was passed in 1764, he styles it "an *usurpation* of the Americans' *most precious and sacred rights*." Consequently he here admits the most energetic of all causes, that is, *an usurpation of their most precious and sacred rights*, to have existed in America twelve years before the declaration of independence, and ten years before the breaking out of hostilities. The time, therefore, in which the paragraph is true, must be antecedent to the stamp act, but as at that time there was no revolution, nor any idea of one, it consequently applies without a meaning; and as it cannot, on the Abbé's own principle, be applied to any time *after* the stamp act, it is therefore a wandering solitary paragraph connected with nothing, and at variance with every thing.

The stamp act, it is true, was repealed in two years after it was passed, but it was immediately followed by one of infinitely more mischievous magnitude; I mean the declaratory act, which asserted the right, as it was styled, of the British parliament, "*to bind America in all cases whatsoever.*"

If then the stamp act was an usurpation of the Americans' most precious and sacred rights, the declaratory act left them no rights at all; and contained the full grown seeds of the most despotic government ever exercised in the world. It placed America not only in the lowest, but in the basest state of vassalage; because it demanded an unconditional submission in every thing, or as the act expresses it, *in all cases whatsoever:* and what renders

this act the more offensive is, that it appears to have been passed as an act of mercy ; truly then may it be said, that *the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.*

All the original charters from the crown of England, under the faith of which the adventurers from the old world settled in the new, were by this act displaced from their foundations; because, contrary to the nature of them, which was that of a compact, they were now made subject to repeal or alteration at the mere will of one party only. The whole condition of America was thus put into the hands of parliament or the ministry, without leaving to her the least right in any case whatsoever.

There is no depotism to which this iniquitous law did not extend ; and though it might have been convenient in the execution of it, to have consulted manners and habits, the principle of the act made all tyranny legal. It stopped nowhere. It went to every thing. It took in with it the whole life of a man or, if I may so express it, an eternity of circumstances. It is the nature of law to require obedience, but this demanded servitude ; and the condition of an American, under the operation of it, was not that of a subject, but a vassal. Tyranny has often been established *without* law and sometimes *against* it, but the history of mankind does not produce another instance, in which it has been established *by* law. It is an audacious outrage upon civil government, and cannot be too much exposed, in order to be sufficiently detested.

Neither could it be said after this, that the legislature of that country any longer made laws for this, but that it gave out commands; for wherein differed an act of parliament constructed on this principle, and operating in this manner, over an unrepresented people, from the orders of a military establishment.

The parliament of England, with respect to America, was not septennial but *perpetual.* It appeared to the latter a body always in being. Its election or expiration

were to her the same as if its members succeeded by inheritance, or went out by death, or lived for ever, or were appointed to it as a matter of office. Therefore, for the people of England to have any just conception of the mind of America, respecting this extraordinary act, they must suppose all election and expiration in that country to cease for ever, and the present parliament, its heirs, &c., to be perpetual; in this case, I ask, what would the most clamorous of them think, were an act to be passed, declaring the right of *such a parliament* to bind *them* in all cases whatsoever? For this word *whatsoever* would go as effectually to their *magna charta*, *bill of rights*, *trial by juries*, *&c.*, as it went to the charters and forms of government in America.

I am persuaded, that the gentleman to whom I address these remarks, will not, after the passing this act, say, "that the *principles* of administration had not been *changed* in America, and that the maxims of government had there been *always the same.*" For here is, in principle, a total overthrow of the whole; and not a subversion only, but an annihilation of the foundation of liberty, and absolute domination established in its stead.

The Abbé likewise states the case exceedingly wrong and injuriously, when he says, "that *the whole* question was reduced to the knowing whether the mother country had, or had not, a right to lay, directly or indirectly, a *slight* tax upon the colonies." This was *not the whole* of the question; neither was the *quantity* of the tax the object either to the ministry or to the Americans. It was the principle, of which the tax made but a part, and the quantity still less, that formed the ground on which America resisted.

The tax on tea, which is the tax here alluded to, was neither more nor less than an experiment to establish the practice of the declaratory law upon; modeled into the more fashonable phrase *of the universal supremacy*

of parliament. For until this time the declaratory law had lain dormant, and the framers of it had contented themselves with barely declaring an opinion.

Therefore the *whole* question with America, in the opening of the dispute, was, shall we be bound in all cases whatsoever by the British parliament, or shall we not?

For submission to the tea or tax act implied an acknowledgment of the declaratory act, or, in other words, of the universal supremacy of parliament, which as they never intended to do, it was necessary they should oppose it, in its first stage of execution.

It is probable the Abbé has been led into this mistake by perusing detached pieces in some of the American newspapers; for, in a case where all were interested, every one had a right to give his opinion; and there were many, who, with the best intentions, did not choose the best, nor indeed the true ground, to defend their cause upon. They felt themselves right by a general impulse, without being able to separate, analyze and arrange the parts.

I am somewhat unwilling to examine too minutely into the whole of this extraordinary passage of the Abbé, lest I should appear to treat it with severity: otherwise I could show that not a single declaration is justly founded. For instance, the reviving an obsolete act of the reign of Henry VIII, and fitting it to the Americans, by authority of which they were to be seized and brought from America to England, and there imprisoned and tried for any supposed offences, was, in the worst sense of the words, *to tear them, by the abitrary power of parliament, from the arms of their families and friends, and drag them not only to dreary but distant dungeons.* Yet this act was contrived some years before the breaking out of hostilities. And again, though the blood of martyrs and patriots had not streamed on the scaffolds, it streamed

in the streets in the massacre of the inhabitants of Boston by the British soldiery in the year 1770."

Had the Abbé said that the causes which produced the revolution in America were originally *different* from those which produced revolutions in other parts of the globe, he had been right. Here the value and quality of liberty, the nature of government, and the dignity of man, were known and understood, and the attachment of the Americans to these principles produced the revolution, as a natural and almost unavoidable consequence. They had no particular family to set up or pull down. Nothing of personality was incorporated with their cause. They started even-handed with each other, and went no faster into the several stages of it, than they were driven by the unrelenting and imperious conduct of Britain. Nay, in the last act, the Declaration of Independence, they had nearly been too late; for had it not been declared at the exact time it was, I see no period in their affairs since, in which it could have been declared with the same effect, and probably not at all.

But the object being formed before the reverse of fortune took place, that is, before the operations of the gloomy campaign of 1776, their honor, their interest, their every thing, called loudly on them to maintain it; and that glow of thought and energy of heart, which even a distant prospect of independence inspires, gave confidence to their hopes, and resolution to their conduct, which a state of dependence could never have reached. They looked forward to happier days and scenes of rest, and qualified the hardships of the campaign by contemplating the establishment of their new born system.

If, on the other hand, we take a review of what part Britain has acted, we shall find every thing which ought to make a nation blush. The most vulgar abuse, accompanied by that species of haughtiness which distinguishes the hero of a mob from the character of a

gentleman; it was equally as much from her manners as from her injustice that she lost the colonies. By the latter she provoked their principles, by the former she wore out their temper; and it ought to be held out as an example to the world, to show how necessary it is to conduct the business of government with civility. In short, other revolutions may have originated in caprice, or generated in ambition; but here, the most unoffending humility was tortured into rage, and the infancy of existence made to weep.

A union so extensive, continued and determined, suffering with patience and never in despair, could not have been produced by common causes. It must be something capable of reaching the whole soul of man and arming it with perpetual energy. In vain is it to look for precedents among the revolutions of former ages, to find out, by comparison, the causes of this. The spring, the progress, the object, the consequences, nay, the men, their habits of thinking, and all the circumstances of the country are different. Those of other nations are, in general, little more than the history of their quarrels. They are marked by no important character in the annals of events; mixed in the mass of general matters, they occupy but a common page; and while the chief of the successful partisans stepped into power, the plundered multitude sat down and sorrowed. Few, very few of them are accompanied with reformation, either in government or manners; many of them with the most consummate profligacy. Triumph on the one side and misery on the other were the only events. Pains, punishments, torture, and death were made the business of mankind, until compassion, the fairest associate of the heart, was driven from its place, and the eye, accustomed to continual cruelty, could behold it without offence.

But as the principles of the present revolution differed

from those which preceded it, so likewise has the conduct of America both in government and war. Neither the foul finger of disgrace nor the bloody hand of vengeance has hitherto put a blot upon her fame. Her victories have received lustre from a greatness of lenity; and her laws been permitted to slumber, where they might justly have awakened to punish. War, so much the trade of the world, has here been only the business of necessity; and when the necessity shall cease, her very enemies must confess, that as she drew the sword in her just defence, she used it without cruelty and sheathed it without revenge.

As it is not my design to extend these remarks to a history, I shall now take my leave of this passage of the Abbé, with an observation, which, until something unfolds itself to convince me otherwise, I cannot avoid believing to be true;—which is, that it was the fixed determination of the British cabinet to quarrel with America at all events.

They (the members who composed the cabinet) had no doubt of success, if they could bring it to the issue of a battle, and they expected from a conquest, what they could neither propose with decency, nor hope for by negotiation. The charters and constitutions of the colonies were become to them matters of offence, and their rapid progress in property and population were disgustingly beheld as the growing and natural means of independence. They saw no way to retain them long but by reducing them in time. A conquest would at once have made them both lords and landlords; and put them in possession both of the revenue and the rental. The whole trouble of government would have ceased in a victory, and a final end been put to remonstrance and debate. The experience of the stamp act had taught them how to quarrel with the advantages of cover and convenience, and they had nothing to do but to renew

the scene, and put contention into motion. They hoped for a rebellion, and they made one. They expected a declaration of independence and they were not disappointed. But after this, they looked for victory, and they obtained a defeat.

If this be taken as the generating cause of the contest, then is every part of the conduct of the British ministry consistent from the commencement of the dispute, until the signing the treaty of Paris, after which, conquest becoming doubtful, they retreated to negotiation, and were again defeated.

Though the Abbé possesses and displays great powers of genius, and is a master of style and language, he seems not to pay equal attention to the office of an historian. His facts are coldly and carelessly stated. They neither inform the reader nor interest him. Many of them are erroneous, and most of them defective and obscure. It is undoubtedly both an ornament and a useful addition to history, to accompany it with maxims and reflections. They afford likewise an agreeable change to the style and a more diversified manner of expression: but it is absolutely necessary that the root from whence they spring, or the foundation on which they are raised, should be well attended to, which in this work they are not. The Abbé hastens through his narrations as if he was glad to get from them, that he may enter the more copious field of eloquence and imagination.

The actions of Trenton and Princeton in New Jersey, in December, 1776, and January following, on which the fate of America stood for a while trembling on the point of suspense, and from which the most important consequences followed, are comprised within a single paragraph, faintly conceived, and barren of character, circumstance and description.

"On the 25th of December," says the Abbé, "they (the Americans) crossed the Delaware, and fell *accident-*

ally upon Trenton, which was occupied by fifteen hundred of the twelve thousand Hessians, sold in so base a manner by their avaricious master to the king of Great Britain. This corps was *massacred*, taken, or dispersed. Eight days after, three English regiments were, in like manner, driven from Princeton, but after having better supported their reputation than the foreign troops in their pay."

This is all the account which is given of these most interesting events. The Abbé has preceded them by two or three pages on the military operations of both armies, from the time of General Howe's arriving before New York from Halifax, and the vast reinforcements of British and foreign troops with Lord Howe from England. But in these, there is so much mistake, and so many omissions, that, to set them right, must be the business of history and not of a letter. The action of Long Island is but barely hinted at, and the operations at White Plains wholly omitted: as are likewise the attack and loss of Fort Washington, with a garrison of about two thousand five hundred men, and the precipitate evacuation of Fort Lee in consequence thereof; which losses were in a great measure the cause of the retreat through the Jerseys to the Delaware, a distance of about ninety miles. Neither is the manner of the retreat described, which, from the season of the year, the nature of the country, the nearness of the two armies, (sometimes within sight and shot of each other, for such a length of way), the rear of the one employed in pulling down bridges, and the van of the other in building them up, must necessarily be accompanied with many interesting circumstances.

It was a period of distresses. A crisis rather of danger than of hope. There is no description can do it justice; and even the actors in it, looking back upon the scene, are surprised how they got through; and at a loss to ac-

count for those powers of the mind and springs of animation, by which they withstood the force of accumulated misfortune.

It was expected, that the time for which the army was enlisted, would carry the campaign so far into the winter, that the severity of the season, and the consequent condition of the roads, would prevent any material operation of the enemy until the new army could be raised for the next year. And I mention it as a matter worthy of attention by all future historians, that the movements of the American army, until the attack upon the Hessian post at Trenton, the 26th of December, are to be considered as operating to effect no other principal purpose than delay, and to wear away the campaign under all the disadvantages of an unequal force, with as little misfortune as possible.

But the loss of the garrison at Fort Washington on the 16th of November, and the expiration of the time of a considerable part of the army, so early as the 30th of the same month, and which was to be followed by almost daily expirations afterwards, made retreat the only final expedient. To these circumstances may be added the forlorn and destitute condition of the few that remained ; for the garrison of Fort Lee, which composed almost the whole of the retreat, had been obliged to abandon it so instantaneously, that every article of stores and baggage was left behind, and in this destitute condition, without tent or blanket, and without any other utensils to dress their provision than what they procured by the way, they performed a march of about ninety miles, and had the address and management to prolong it to the space of nineteen days.

By this unexpected or rather unthought of turn of affairs, the country was in an instant surprised into confusion, and found an enemy within its bowels, without an army to oppose him. There were no succors to be

had, but from the free-will offering of the inhabitants. All was choice and every man reasoned for himself.

It was in this situation of affairs, equally calculated to confound or to inspire, that the gentleman, the merchant, the farmer, the tradesman and the laborer mutually turned from all the conveniences of home, to perform the duties of private soldiers and undergo the severities of a winter campaign. The delay, so judiciously contrived on the retreat, afforded time for the volunteer reinforcements to join General Washington on the Delaware.

The Abbé is likewise wrong in saying, that the American army fell *accidentally* on Trenton. It was the very object for which General Washington crossed the Delaware in the dead of the night and in the midst of snow, storms, and ice; and which he immediately re-crossed with his prisoners, as soon as he had accomplished his purpose. Neither was the intended enterprise a secret to the enemy, information having been sent of it by letter, from a British officer at Princeton, to Colonel Rolle, who commanded the Hessians at Trenton, which letter was afterwards found by the Americans. Nevertheless the post was completely surprised. A small circumstance, which had the appearance of mistake on the part of the Americans, led to a more capital and real mistake on the part of Rolle.

The case was this. A detachment of twenty or thirty Americans had been sent across the river, from a post a few miles above, by an officer unacquainted with the intended attack; these were met by a body of Hessians, on the night to which the information pointed, which was Christmas night, and repulsed. Nothing farther appearing, and the Hessians, mistaking this for the advanced party, supposed the enterprise disconcerted, which at that time was not begun, and under this idea, returned to their quarters; so that, what might have

raised an alarm, and brought the Americans into an ambuscade, served to take off the force of an information and promote the success of the enterprise. Soon after day-light General Washington entered the town, and after a little opposition, made himself master of it, with upwards of nine hundred prisoners.

This combination of equivocal circumstances, falling within what the Abbé styles, "*the wide empire of chance*," would have afforded a fine field for thought, and I wish, for the sake of that elegance of reflection he is so capable of using, that he had known it.

But the action at Princeton was accompanied by a still greater embarrassment of matters, and followed by more extraordinary consequences. The Americans, by a happy stroke of generalship, in this instance, not only deranged and defeated all the plans of the British, in the intended moment of execution, but drew from their posts the enemy they were not able to drive, and obliged them to close the campaign. As the circumstance is a curiosity in war, and not well understood in Europe, I shall, as concisely as I can, relate the principal parts; they may serve to prevent future historians from error, and recover from forgetfulness a scene of magnificent fortitude.

Immediately after the surprise of the Hessians at Trenton, General Washington re-crossed the Delaware, which at this place is about three-quarters of a mile over, and reassumed his former post on the Pennsylvania side. Trenton remained unoccupied, and the enemy were posted at Princeton, twelve miles distant, on the road towards New York. The weather was now growing very severe, and as there were very few houses near the shore where General Washington had taken his station, the greatest part of his army remained out in the woods and fields. These, with some other circumstances, induced the re-crossing the Delaware and taking possession of Trenton. It was undoubtedly a bold adventure, and carried with

it the appearance of defiance, especially when we consider the panic-struck condition of the enemy on the loss of the Hessian post. But in order to give a just idea of the affair, it is necessary I should describe the place.

Trenton is situated on a rising ground, about three-quarters of a mile distant from the Delaware, on the eastern or Jersey side; and is cut into two divisions by a small creek or rivulet, sufficient to turn a mill which is on it, after which it empties itself at nearly right angles into the Delaware. The upper division, which is that to the northeast, contains about seventy or eighty houses, and the lower about forty or fifty. The ground on each side this creek, and on which the houses are, is likewise rising, and the two divisions present an agreeable prospect to each other, with the creek between, on which there is a small stone bridge of one arch.

Scarcely had General Washington taken his post here, and before the several parties of militia, out on detachments or on their way, could be collected, than the British, leaving behind them a strong garrison at Princeton, marched suddenly and entered Trenton at the upper or northeast quarter. A party of the Americans skirmished with the advanced party of the British, to afford time for removing the stores and baggage, and withdrawing over the bridge.

In a little time the British had possession of one-half of the town, General Washington of the other; and the creek only separated the two armies. Nothing could be a more critical situation than this, and if ever the fate of America depended upon the event of a day, it was now. The Delaware was filling fast with large sheets of driving ice, and was impassable; so that no retreat into Pennsylvania could be effected, neither is it possible, in the face of an enemy, to pass a river of such extent. The roads were broken and rugged with the frost, and the main road was occupied by the enemy.

About four o'clock a party of the British approached the bridge, with a design to gain it, but were repulsed. They made no more attempts, though the creek itself is passable any where between the bridge and the Delaware. It runs in a rugged, natural made ditch, over which a person may pass with little difficulty, the stream being rapid and shallow. Evening was now coming on, and the British believing they had all the advantages they could wish for, and that they could use them when they pleased, discontinued all further operations, and held themselves prepared to make the attack next morning.

But the next morning produced a scene as elegant as it was unexpected. The British were under arms and ready to march to action, when one of their light-horse from Princeton came furiously down the street, with an account that General Washington had that morning attacked and carried the British post at that place, and was proceeding on to seize the magazine at Brunswick; on which the British, who were then on the point of making an assault on the evacuated camp of the Americans, wheeled about, and in a fit of consternation marched for Princeton.

This retreat is one of those extraordinary circumstances that in future ages may probably pass for fable. For it will with difficulty be believed that two armies, on which such important consequences depended, should be crowded into so small a space as Trenton; and that the one, on the eve of an engagement, when every ear is supposed to be open, and every degree of watchfulness employed, should move completely from the ground, with all its stores, baggage and artillery, unknown and even unsuspected by the other. And so entirely were the British deceived, that when they heard the report of the cannon and small arms at Princeton, they supposed it to be thunder, though in the depth of winter.

General Washington, the better to cover and disguise

his retreat from Trenton, had ordered a line of fires to be lighted up in front of his camp. These not only served to give an appearance of going to rest, and continuing that deception, but they effectually concealed from the British whatever was acting behind them, for flame can no more be seen through than a wall, and in this situation, it may with some propriety be said, they became a pillar of fire to one army, and a pillar of a cloud to the other. After this, by a circuitous march of about eighteen miles, the Americans reached Princeton early in the morning.

The number of prisoners taken were between two and three hundred, with which General Washington immediately set off. The van of the British army from Trenton entered Princeton about an hour after the Americans had left it, who, continuing their march for the remainder of the day, arrived in the evening at a convenient situation, wide of the main road to Brunswick, and about sixteen miles distant from Princeton. But so wearied and exhausted were they, with the continual and unabated service and fatigue of two days and a night, from action to action, without shelter, and almost without refreshment, that the bare and frozen ground, with no other covering than the sky, became to them a place of comfortable rest. By these two events, and with but a little comparative force to accomplish them, the Americans closed with advantage a campaign, which, but a few days before, threatened the country with destruction. The British army, apprehensive for the safety of their magazines at Brunswick, eighteen miles distant, marched immediately for that place, where they arrived late in the evening, and from which they made no attempts to move, for nearly five months.

Having thus stated the principal outlines of these two most interesting actions, I shall now quit them, to put the Abbé right in his misstated account of the debt and

paper money of America, wherein, speaking of these matters, he says:

"These ideal riches were rejected. The more the multiplication of them was urged by want, the greater did their depreciation grow. The Congress was indignant at the affront given to its money, and declared all those to be traitors to their country, who should not receive it as they would have received gold itself.

"Did not this body know, that prepossessions are no more to be controlled than feelings are? Did it not perceive that, in the present crisis, every rational man would be afraid of exposing his fortune? Did it not see, that at the beginning of a republic, it permitted to itself the exercise of such acts of depotism as are unknown even in the countries which are moulded to, and become familiar with servitude and oppression? Could it pretend that it did not punish a want of confidence with the pains which would have been scarcely merited by revolt and treason? Of all this was the Congress well aware. But it had no choice of means. Its despised and despicable scraps of paper were actually thirty times below their original value, when more of them were ordered to be made. On the 13th of September, 1779, there was of this paper among the public, to the amount of £35,544,155. The state owed moreover £8,385,356, without reckoning the particular debts of single provinces."

In the above recited passages, the Abbé speaks as if the United States had contracted a debt of upwards of forty million pounds sterling, besides the debts of the individual states. After which, speaking of foreign trade with America, he says, that "those countries in Europe, which are truly commercial ones, knowing that North America had been reduced to contract debts, at the epoch even of her greatest prosperity, wisely thought that, in her present distress, she would be able to pay but very little for what might be carried to her."

I know it must be extremely difficult to make foreigners understand the nature and circumstances of our paper money, because there are natives who do not understand it themselves. But with us its fate is now determined. Common consent has consigned it to rest with that kind of regard, which the long service of inanimate things insensibly obtains from mankind. Every stone in the bridge that has carried us over, seems to have a claim upon our esteem. But this was a corner stone, and its usefulness cannot be forgotten. There is something in a grateful mind, which extends itself even to things that can neither be benefited by regard, nor suffer by neglect: but so it is; and almost every man is sensible of the effect.

But to return. The paper money, though issued from Congress under the name of dollars, did not come from that body always at that value. Those which were issued the first year, were equal to gold and silver. The second year less, the third still less, and so on, for nearly the space of five years: at the end of which, I imagine, that the whole value, at which Congress might pay away the several emissions, taking them together, was about ten or twelve million pounds sterling.

Now as it would have taken ten or twelve millions sterling of taxes to carry on the war for five years, and, as while this money was issuing and likewise depreciating down to nothing, there were none, or few valuable taxes paid; consequently, the event to the public was the same, whether they sunk ten or twelve millions of expended money by depreciation, or paid ten or twelve millions by taxation; for as they did not do both, and chose to do one, the matter which, in a general view, was indifferent. And therefore, what the Abbé supposes to be a debt, has now no existence; it having been paid, by every body consenting to reduce, at his own expense, from the value of the bills continually passing among themselves, a sum

equal, nearly, to what the expense of the war was for five years.

Again. The paper money having now ceased, and the depreciation with it, and gold and silver supplied its place, the war will now be carried on by taxation, which will draw from the public a considerable less sum than what the depreciation drew ; but as while they pay the former, they do not suffer the latter, and as when they suffered the latter, they did not pay the former, the thing will be nearly equal, with this moral advantage, that taxation occasions frugality and thought, and depreciation produced dissipation and carelessness.

And again. If a man's portion of taxes comes to less than what he lost by the depreciation, it proves that the alteration is in his favor. If it comes to more, and he is justly assessed, it shows that he did not sustain his proper share of depreciation, because the one was as operatively his tax as the other.

It is true, that it never was intended, neither was it foreseen, that the debt contained in the paper currency should sink itself in this manner ; but as, by the voluntary conduct of all and of every one, it has arrived at this fate, the debt is paid by those who owed it. Perhaps nothing was ever so universally the act of a country as this. Government had no hand in it. Every man depreciated his own money by his own consent, for such was the effect, which the raising the nominal value of goods produced. But as by such reduction he sustained a loss equal to what he must have paid to sink it by taxation, therefore the line of justice is to consider his loss by the depreciation as his tax for that time, and not to tax him when the war is over, to make that money good in any other person's hands, which became nothing in his own.

Again. The paper currency was issued for the express purpose of carrying on the war. It has performed that service, without any other material charge to the public,

while it lasted. But to suppose, as some did, that at the end of the war, it was to grow into gold or silver, or become equal thereto, was to suppose that we were to *get* two hundred millions of dollars by *going to war*, instead of *paying* the cost of carrying it on.

But if any thing in the situation of America, as to her currency or her circumstances, yet remains not understood, then let it be remembered, that this war is the public's war; the people's war; the country's war. It is *their* independence that is to be supported; *their* property that is to be secured; *their* country that is to be saved. Here, government, the army, and the people, are mutually and reciprocally one. In other wars, kings may lose their thrones, and their dominions; but here, the loss must fall on the majesty of the multitude, and the property they are contending to save. Every man being sensible of this, he goes to the field, or pays his portion of the charge, as the sovereign of his own possessions; and when he is conquered, a monarch falls.

The remark, which the Abbé in the conclusion of the passage has made, respecting America's contracting debts in the time of her prosperity, (by which he means, before the breaking out of hostilities,) serves to show, though he has not made the application, the very great commercial difference between a dependant and an independent country. In a state of dependence, and with a fettered commerce, though with all the advantages of peace, her trade could not balance itself, and she annually ran into debt. But now, in a state of independence, though involved in war, she requires no credit; her stores are full of merchandise, and gold and silver are become the currency of the country. How these things have established themselves is difficult to account for: but they are facts, and facts are more powerful than arguments.

As it is probable this letter will undergo a re-publica-

tion in Europe, the remarks here thrown together will serve to show the extreme folly of Britain in resting her hopes of success on the extinction of our paper currency. The expectation is at once so childish and forlorn, that it places her in the laughable condition of a famished lion watching for prey at a spider's web.

From this account of the currency, the Abbé proceeds to state the condition of America in the winter of 1777, and the spring following; and closes his observations with mentioning the treaty of alliance, which was signed in France, and the propositions of the British ministry, which were rejected in America. But in the manner in which the Abbé has arranged his facts, there is a very material error, that not only he, but other European historians have fallen into; none of them having assigned the true cause why the British proposals were rejected, and all of them have assigned a wrong one.

In the winter of 1778, and spring following, Congress were assembled at Yorktown, in Pennsylvania, the British were in possession of Philadelphia, and General Washington with the army were encamped in huts at the Valley Forge, twenty-five miles distant therefrom. To all, who can remember, it was a season of hardship, but not despair; and the Abbé, speaking of this period and its inconveniences, says: "A multitude of privations, added to so many other misfortunes, might make the Americans regret their former tranquillity, and incline them to an accommodation with England. In vain had the people been bound to the new government by the sacredness of oaths and the influence of religion. In vain had endeavors been used to convince them that it was impossible to treat safely with a country, in which one parliament might overturn what should have been established by another. In vain had they been threatened with the eternal resentment of an exasperated and

vindictive enemy. It was possible that these distant troubles might not be balanced by the weight of present evils.

"So thought the British ministry when they sent to the new world public agents, authorized to offer every thing except independence, to these very Americans from whom they had two years before exacted an unconditional submission. It is not improbable but that by this plan of conciliation, a few months sooner, some effect might have been produced. But at the period at which it was proposed by the court of London, it was rejected with disdain, because this measure appeared but as an argument of fear and weakness. The people were already reassured. The Congress, the generals, the troops, the bold and skilful men in each colony, had possessed themselves of the authority; every thing had recovered its first spirit. *This was the effect of a treaty of friendship and commerce between the United States and the court of Versailles, signed the 6th of February, 1778.*"

On this passage of the Abbé's I cannot help remarking that, to unite time with circumstance is a material nicety in history; the want of which frequently throws it into endless confusion and mistake, occasions a total separation between causes and consequences, and connects them with others they are not immediately, and sometimes not at all related to.

The Abbé, in saying that the offers of the British ministry "were rejected with disdain," is *right* as to the *fact*, but *wrong* as to the *time;* and this error in the time has occasioned him to be mistaken in the cause.

The signing the treaty of Paris the 6th of February, 1778, could have no effect on the mind or politics of America until it was *known in America;* and therefore, when the Abbé says that the rejection of the British offers was in consequence of the alliance, he must mean

that it was in consequence of the alliance *being known* in America, which was not the case : and by this mistake he not only takes from her the reputation which her unshaken fortitude in that trying situation deserves, but is likewise led very injuriously to suppose that, had she *not known* of the treaty the offers would probably have been accepted ; whereas she knew nothing of the treaty at the time of the rejection, and consequently did not reject them on that ground.

The propositions or offers above mentioned were contained in two bills brought into the British parliament by Lord North on the 17th of February, 1778. Those bills were hurried through both houses with unusual haste, and before they had gone through all the customary forms of parliament, copies of them were sent over to Lord Howe and General Howe, then in Philadelphia, who were likewise commissioners. General Howe ordered them to be printed in Philadelphia, and sent copies of them by a flag to General Washington to be forwarded to Congress at Yorktown, where they arrived the 21st of April, 1778. Thus much for the arrival of the bills in America.

Congress, as is their usual mode, appointed a committee from their own body, to examine them and report thereon. The report was brought in the next day (the twenty-second), was read, and unanimously agreed to, entered on their journals, and published for the information of the country. Now this report must be the rejection to which the Abbé alludes, because Congress gave no other formal opinion on those bills and propositions. And on a subsequent application from the British commissioners, dated the 27th of May, and received at Yorktown the 6th of June, Congress immediately referred them for an answer to their printed resolves of the 22d of April. Thus much for the rejection of the offers.

On the second of May, that is, eleven days after the above

rejection was made, the treaty between the United States and France arrived at Yorktown; and until this moment Congress had not the least notice or idea, that such a measure was in any train of execution. But lest this declaration of mine should pass only for assertion, I shall support it by proof, for it is material to the character and principle of the revolution to show, that no condition of America since the Declaration of Independence, however trying and severe, ever operated to produce the most distant idea of yielding it up either by force, distress, artifice or persuasion. And this proof is the more necessary, because it was the system of the British ministry at this time, as well as before and since, to hold out to the European powers that America was unfixed in her resolutions and policy; hoping by this artifice to lessen her reputation in Europe, and weaken the confidence which those powers or any of them might be inclined to place in her.

At the time these matters were transacting, I was secretary in the foreign department of congress. All the *political* letters from the American commissioners rested in my hands, and all that were officially written went from my office; and so far from Congress knowing any thing of signing the treaty at the time they rejected the British offers, they had not received a line of information from their commissioners at Paris on any subject whatever for upwards of a twelve-month. Probably the loss of the port of Philadelphia and the navigation of the Delaware, together with the danger of the seas, covered at this time with British cruisers, contributed to the disappointment.

One packet, it is true, arrived at Yorktown in January preceding, which was about three months before the arrival of the treaty; but strange as it may appear, every letter had been taken out before it was put on board the vessel which brought it from France, and blank white paper put in their stead.

Having thus stated the time when the proposals from the British commissioners were first received, and likewise the time when the treaty of alliance arrived, and shown that the rejection of the former was eleven days prior to the arrival of the latter, and without the least knowledge of such circumstance having taken place or being about to take place ; the rejection, therefore, must and ought to be attributed to the fixed, unvaried sentiments of America respecting the enemy she is at war with, and her determination to support her independence to the last public effort, and not to any new circumstance in her favor which at that time she did not and could not know of.

Besides, there is a vigor of determination and spirit of defiance in the language of the rejection, (which I here subjoin,) which derive their greatest glory by appearing before the treaty was known ; for that which is bravery in distress, becomes insult in prosperity : and the treaty placed America on such a strong foundation, that had she then known it, the answer which she gave would have appeared rather as an air of triumph, than as the glowing serenity of fortitude.

Upon the whole, the Abbé appears to have entirely mistaken the matter ; for instead of attibuting the rejection of the propositions to *our knowledge* of the treaty of alliance ; he should have attributed the origin of them in the British cabinet, to *their knowledge* of that event. And then the reason why they were hurried over to America in the state of bills, that is, before they were passed into acts, is easily accounted for, which is, that they might have the chance of reaching America before any knowledge of the treaty should arrive, which they were lucky enough to do, and there met the fate they so richly merited. That these bills were brought into the British parliament after the treaty with France was signed, is proved from the dates : the treaty being on the

6th, and the bills on the 17th of February. And that the signing the treaty was known in parliament when the bills were brought in, is likewise proved by a speech of Mr. Charles Fox, on the said 17th of February, who, in reply to Lord North, informed the house of the treaty being signed, and challenged the minister's knowledge of the same fact.*

* In Congress, April 22nd, 1788.

"The committee to whom was referred the General's letter of the 18th, containing a certain printed paper sent from Philadelphia, purporting to be the draught of a bill for declaring the *intentions* of the parliament of Great Britain, as to the *exercise* of what they are pleased to term their *right* of imposing taxes within these United States; and also the draught of a bill to enable the king of Great Britain to appoint commissioners, with powers to treat, consult, and agree upon the means of quieting certain disorders within the said states, beg leave to observe.

"That the said paper being industriously circulated by emissaries of the enemy, in a partial and secret manner, the same ought to be forthwith printed for the public information.

"The committee cannot ascertain whether the contents of said paper have been framed in Philadelphia or Great Britain, much less whether the same are really and truly intended to be brought into the parliament of that kingdom, or whether the said parliament will confer thereon the usual solemnities of their laws. But are inclined to believe this will happen, for the following reasons:

"1st, Because their general hath made divers feeble efforts to set on foot some kind of treaty during the last winter, though, either from a mistaken idea of his own dignity and importance, the want of information, or some other cause, he hath not made application to those who are invested with a proper authority.

"2nd, Because they suppose that the fallacious idea of a cessation of hostilities will render these states remiss in their preparations for war.

"3d, Because believing the Americans wearied with war, they suppose we will accede to their terms for the sake of peace.

"4th, Because they suppose that our negotiations may be subject to a like corrupt influence with their debates.

"5th, Because they expect from this step the same effects they did from what one of their ministers thought proper to call his *conciliatory motion, viz.*, that it will prevent foreign powers from giving aid to these states; that it will lead their own subjects to continue a little longer the present war; and that it will detach some weak men in America from the cause of freedom and virtue.

"6th, Because their king, from his own showing, hath reason to apprehend that his fleets and armies, instead of being employed against the territories of these states, will be necessary for the defence of his own dominions. And,

"7th, Because the impracticability of subjugating this country being every day more and more manifest, it is their interest to extricate themselves from the war upon any terms.

"The committee beg leave further to observe, that upon a supposition the matters contained in the said paper will really go into the British statute books, they serve to show, in a clear point of view, the weakness and wickedness of the enemy.

"*Their weakness.*

"1st, Because they formerly declared, not only that they had a right to bind the inhabitants of these states in all cases whatsoever, but also that the said inhabitants should *absolutely* and *unconditionally* submit to the exercise of that right. And this submission they have endeavored to exact by the sword. Receding from this claim, therefore, under the present circumstances, shows their inability to enforce it.

Though I am not surprised to see the Abbé mistaken in matters of history, acted at such a distance from his sphere of immediate observation, yet I am more than surprised to find him wrong (or at least what appears so to me) in the well enlightened field of philosophical re-

"2nd, Because their prince hath heretofore rejected the humblest petitions of the representatives of America, praying to be considered as subjects, and protected in the enjoyment of peace, liberty and safety: and hath waged a most cruel war against them, and employed the savages to butcher innocent women and children. But now the same prince pretends to treat with those very representatives, and grant to the *arms* of America what he refused to her *prayers*,

"3d, Because they have uniformly labored to conquer this continent, rejecting every idea of accommodation proposed to them, from a confidence in their own strength. Wherefore it is evident, from the change in their mode of attack, that they have lost this confidence. And,

"4th, Because the constant language spoken, not only by their ministers, but by the most public and authentic acts of the nation, hath been, that it is incompatible with their dignity to treat with the Americans while they have arms in their hands. Notwithstanding which, an offer is now about to be made for treaty.

"*The wickedness and insincerity* of the enemy appear from the following considerations:

"1st, Either the *bills* now to be passed contain a direct or indirect cession of a part of their former claims, or they do not. If they do, then it is acknowledged that they have sacrificed many brave men in an unjust quarrel. If they do not, then they are calculated to deceive America into terms, to which neither argument before the war, nor force since, could procure her assent.

"3d, The first of these *bills* appears, from the title, to be a declaration of the *intentions* of the British parliament concerning the exercise of the *right of imposing taxes* within these states. Wherefore, should these states treat under the said bill, they would *indirectly* acknowledge that right, to obtain which acknowledgment the present war hath been avowedly undertaken and prosecuted on the part of Great Britain.

"3d, Should such pretended right be so acquiesced in, then, of consequence, the same might be exercised whenever the British parliament should find themselves in a different *temper* and *disposition*; since it must depend upon those, and such like contingencies, how far men will act according to their former *intentions*.

"4th, The said first bill, in the body thereof, containeth no new matter, but is precisely the same with the motion before mentioned, and liable to all the objections which lay against the said motion, excepting the following particular, *viz.* that *by the motion* actual taxation was to be suspended, so long as America should give as much as the said parliament might think proper: whereas, *by the proposed bill*, it is to be suspended, so long as further parliaments continue of the same mind with the present.

"5th, From the second bill it appears, that the British king may, if he pleases, appoint commissioners to *treat* and *agree* with those, whom they please, about a variety of things therein mentioned. But such treaties and agreements are to be of no validity without the concurrence of the said parliament, except so far as they relate to the *suspension* of hostilities, and of certain of their acts, the granting of pardons, and the appointing of governors to the sovereign, free and independent states. Wherefore, the said parliament have reserved to themselves, in *express words*, the power of setting aside any such treaty, and taking the advantage of any circumstances which may arise to subject this continent to their usurpations.

"6th, The said bill, by holding forth a tender of pardon, implies a criminality in our justifiable resistance, and consequently, to treat under it would be an implied acknowledgment, that the inhabitants of these states were what Britain has declared them to be, *Rebels*.

"7th, The inhabitants of these states being claimed by them as subjects, they may infer, from the nature of the negotiation now pretended to be set on foot, that the said

flection. Here the materials are his own; created by himself; and the error, therefore, is an act of the mind.

Hitherto my remarks have been confined to circumstances; the order in which they arose, and the events they produced. In these, my information being better

inhabitants would of right be afterwards bound by such laws as they should make. Wherefore, any agreement entered into on such negotiation might at any future time be repealed. And,

"8th, Because the said bill purports, that the commissioners therein mentioned may treat with private individuals: a measure highly derogatory to the dignity of national character.

"From all which it appears evident to your committee, that the said bills are intended to operate upon the hopes and fears of the good people of these states, so as to create divisions among them, and a defection from the common cause, now by the blessing of divine providence drawing near to a favorable issue. That they are the sequel of that insidious plan which from the days of the stamp act down to the present time, hath involved this country in contention and bloodshed. And that, as in other cases so in this, although circumstances may force them at times to recede from their unjustifiable claims, there can be no doubt but they will as heretofore, upon the first favorable occasion, again display that lust of domination, which hath rent in twain the mighty empire of Britain.

"Upon the whole matter, the committee beg leave to report it as their opinion, that as the Americans united in this arduous contest upon principles of common interest, for the defence of common rights and privileges, which union hath been cemented by common calamities and by mutual good offices and affection, so the great cause for which they contend, and in which all mankind are interested, must derive its success from the continuance of that union. Wherefore, any man, or body of men, who should presume to make any separate or partial convention or agreement with commissioners under the crown of Great Britain, or any of them, ought to be considered and treated as open and avowed enemies of the United States.

"And further your committee beg leave to report it as their opinion, that these United States cannot with propriety, hold any conference or treaty with *any* commissioners on the part of Great Britain, unless they shall, as a preliminary thereto, either withdraw their fleets and armies, or else, in positive and express terms, acknowledge the independence of the said states.

"And inasmuch as it appears to be the design of the enemies of these states to lull them into a fatal security to the end that they may act with becoming weight and importance, it is the opinion of your committee, that the several states be called upon to use the most strenuous exertions to have their respective quotas of continental troops in the field as soon as possible, and that all the militia of the said states be held in readiness, to act as occasion may require."

The following is the answer of Congress to the second application of the commissioners:

"*Yorktown, June 6, 1778.*

"SIR:—I have had the honor of laying your letter of the 3d instant, with the acts of the British parliament which came inclosed, before Congress; and I am instructed to acquaint you, sir, that they have already expressed their sentiments upon bills, not essentially different from those acts, in a publication of the 22d of April last.

"Be assured, sir, when the king of Great Britain shall be seriously disposed to put an end to the unprovoked and cruel war waged against these United States, Congress will readily attend to such terms of peace, as may consist with the honor of independent nations the interest of their constituents, and the sacred regard they mean to pay to treaties. I have the honor to be, sir,

Your most obedient, and most humble servant,

HENRY LAURENS, President of Congress."

His Excellency, Sir Henry Clinton, K. B. Philadelphia.

than the Abbé's, my task was easy. How I may succeed in controverting matters of sentiment and opinion, with one whom years, experience, and long established reputation have placed in a superior line, I am less confident in; but as they fall within the scope of my observations it would be improper to pass them over.

From this part of the Abbé's work to the latter end, I find several expressions, which appear to me to start with a cynical complexion from the path of liberal thinking, or at least they are so involved as to lose many of the beauties which distinguish other parts of the performance.

The Abbé having brought his work to the period when the treaty of alliance between France and the United States commenced, proceeds to make some remarks thereon.

"In short," says he, "philosophy, whose first sentiment is the desire to see all governments just and all people happy, in casting her eyes upon this alliance of a monarchy, with a people who are defending their liberty, *is curious to know its motive. She sees at once, too clearly, that the happiness of mankind has no part in it.*"

Whatever train of thinking or of temper the Abbé might be in, when he penned this expression, matters not. They will neither qualify the sentiment, nor add to its defect. If right, it needs no apology; if wrong, it merits no excuse. It is sent into the world as an opinion of philosophy, and may be examined without regard to the author.

It seems to be a defect, connected with ingenuity, that it often employs itself more in matters of curiosity, than usefulness. Man must be the privy counsellor of fate, or something is not right. He must know the springs, the whys and wherefores of every thing, or he sits down unsatisfied. Whether this be a crime, or only a caprice of humanity, I am not inquiring into. I

shall take the passage as I find it, and place my objections against it.

It is not so properly the *motives* which *produced* the alliance, as the *consequences* which are to be *produced from it*, that mark out the field of philosophical reflection. In the one we only penetrate into the barren cave of secrecy, where little can be known, and every thing may be misconceived; in the other, the mind is presented with a wide extended prospect of vegetative good, and sees a thousand blessings budding into existence.

But the expression, even within the compass of the Abbé's meaning, sets out with an error, because it is made to declare that which no man has the authority to declare. Who can say that the happiness of mankind made *no part of the motives* which produced the alliance? To be able to declare this, a man must be possessed of the mind of all the parties concerned, and know that their motives were something else.

In proportion as the independence of America became contemplated and understood, the local advantages of it to the immediate actors, and the numerous benefits it promised mankind appeared to be every day increasing; and we saw not a temporary good for the present race only, but a continued good to all posterity; these motives, therefore, added to those which preceded them, became the motives on the part of America, which led her to propose and agree to the treaty of alliance, as the best effectual method of extending and securing happiness; and therefore, with respect to us, the Abbé is wrong.

France, on the other hand, was situated very differently. She was not acted upon by necessity to seek a friend, and therefore her motive in becoming one, has the strongest evidence of being good, and that which is so, must have some happiness for its object. With regard to herself, she saw a train of conveniences worthy her attention. By lessening the power of an enemy, whom at the time,

she sought neither to destroy nor distress, she gained an advantage without doing evil, and created to herself a new friend by associating with a country in misfortune. The springs of thought that lead to actions of this kind, however varied they may be, are nevertheless naturally beneficent ; for in all causes, good or bad, it is necessary there should be a fitness in the mind, to enable it to act in character with the object: therefore, as a bad cause cannot be prosecuted with a good motive, so neither can a good cause be long supported by a bad one ; and as no man acts without a motive, therefore in the present instance, as they cannot be bad, they must be admitted to be good. But the Abbé sets out upon such an extended scale, that he overlooks the degrees by which it is measured, and rejects the beginning of good, because the end comes not out at once.

It is true that bad motives may in some degree be brought to support a good cause or prosecute a good object ; but it never continues long, which is not the case with France ; for either the object will reform the mind, or the mind corrupt the object, or else not being able, either way, to get into unison, they will separate in disgust: and this natural, though unperceived progress of association or contention between the mind and the object, is the secret cause of fidelity or defection. Every object a man pursues, is, for the time, a kind of mistress to his mind : if both are good or bad, the union is natural ; but if they are in reverse, and neither can seduce nor yet reform the other, the opposition grows into dislike, and a separation follows.

When the cause of America first made its appearance on the stage of the universe, there were many, who, in the style of adventurers and fortune-hunters, were dangling in its train, and making their court to it with every profession of honor and attachment. They were loud in its praise and ostentatious in its service. Every place

echoed with their ardor or their anger, and they seemed like men in love. But, alas! they were fortune-hunters. Their expectations were excited, but their minds were unimpressed; and finding it not to their purpose, nor themselves reformed by its influence, they ceased their suit, and in some instances deserted and betrayed it.

There were others, who at first beheld America with indifference, and, unacquainted with her character, were cautious of her company. They treated her as one who, under the fair name of liberty, might conceal the hideous figure of anarchy, or the gloomy monster of tyranny. They knew not what she was. If fair, she was fair indeed. But still she was suspected, and though born among us appeared to be a stranger.

Accident with some, and curiosity with others, brought on a distant acquaintance. They ventured to look at her. They felt an inclination to speak to her. One intimacy led to another, till the suspicion wore away, and a change of sentiment gradually stole upon the mind; and having no self-interest to serve, no passion of dishonor to gratify, they became enamored of her innocence, and unaltered by misfortune or uninfluenced by success, shared with fidelity in the varieties of her fate.

This declaration of the Abbé's respecting motives, has led me, unintentionally, into a train of metaphysical reasoning; but there was no other avenue by which it could so properly be approached. To place presumption against presumption, assertion against assertion, is a mode of opposition that has no effect; and therefore the more eligible method was to show that the declaration does not correspond with the natural progress of the mind and the influence it has upon our conduct. I shall now quit this part and proceed to what I have before stated, namely, that it is not so properly the motives which produced the alliance, as the consequences to be produced from it, that mark out the field of philosophical reflection.

It is an observation I have already made in some former publications, that the circle of civilization is yet incomplete. Mutual wants have formed the individuals of each country into a kind of national society, and here the progress of civilization has stopped. For it is easy to see that nations, with regard to each other, (notwithstanding the ideal civil law, which every one explains as it suits him), are like individuals in a state of nature. They are regulated by no fixed principle, governed by no compulsive law, and each does independently what it pleases or what it can.

Were it possible we could have known the world when in a state of barbarism, we might have concluded that it never could be brought into the order we now see it. The untamed mind was then as hard, if not harder to work upon in its individual state, than the national mind is in its present one. Yet we have seen the accomplishment of the one, why then should we doubt that of the other?

There is a greater fitness in mankind to extend and complete the civilization of nations with each other at this day, than there was to begin it with the unconnected individuals at first; in the same manner that it is somewhat easier to put together the materials of a machine after they are formed, than it was to form them from original matter. The present condition of the world, differing so exceedingly from what it formerly was, has given a new cast to the mind of man, more than what he appears to be sensible of. The wants of the individual which first produced the idea of society, are now augmented into the wants of the nation, and he is obliged to seek from another country what before he sought from the next person.

Letters, the tongue of the world, have in some measure made all mankind acquainted, and by an extension of their uses are every day promoting some new friendship.

Through them distant nations become capable of conversation, and losing by degrees the awkwardness of strangers, and the moroseness of suspicion, they learn to know and understand each other. Science, the partisan of no country, but the beneficent patroness of all, has liberally opened a temple where all may meet. Her influence on the mind, like the sun on the chilled earth, has long been preparing it for higher cultivation and further improvement. The philosopher of one country sees not an enemy in the philosopher of another. He takes his seat in the temple of science, and asks not who sits beside him.

This was not the condition of the barbarian world. Then the wants of men were few and the objects within their reach. While he could acquire these, he lived in a state of individual independence ; the consequence of which was, there were as many nations as persons, each contending with the other to secure something which he had, or to obtain something which he had not. The world had then no business to follow, no studies to exercise the mind. Their time was divided between sloth and fatigue. Hunting and war were their chief occupations ; sleep and food their principal enjoyments.

Now it is otherwise. A change in the mode of life has made it necessary to be busy ; and man finds a thousand things to do now which before he did not. Instead of placing his ideas of greatness in the rude achievements of the savage, he studies arts, sciences, agriculture and commerce—the refinements of the gentleman, the principles of society, and the knowledge of the philosopher.

There are many things which in themselves are neither morally good or bad, but they are productive of consequences which are strongly marked with one or other of these characters. Thus commerce, though in itself a moral nullity, has had a considerable influence in tempering the human mind. It was the want of objects in the

ancient world, which occasioned in them such a rude and perpetual turn for war. Their time hung on their hands without the means of employment. The indolence they lived in afforded leisure for mischief, and being all idle at once, and equal in their circumstances, they were easily provoked or induced to action.

But the introduction of commerce furnished the world with objects which, in their extent, reach every man, and give him something to think about and something to do; by these his attention is mechanically drawn from the pursuits which a state of indolence and an unemployed mind occasioned, and he trades with the same countries which former ages, tempted by their productions and too indolent to purchase them, would have gone to war with.

Thus, as I have already observed, the condition of the world being materially changed by the influence of science and commerce, it is put into a fitness not only to admit of, but to desire an extension of civilization. The principal and almost only remaining enemy it now has to encounter is *prejudice*; for it is evidently the interest of mankind to agree and make the best of life. The world has undergone its divisions of empire, the several boundaries of which are known and settled. The idea of conquering countries, like the Greeks and Romans, does not now exist; and experience has exploded the notion of going to war for the sake of profit. In short, the objects for war are exceedingly diminished, and there is now scarcely any thing left to quarrel about, but what arises from that demon of society, prejudice, and the consequent sullenness and untractableness of the temper.

There is something exceedingly curious in the constitution and operation of prejudice. It has the singular ability of accommodating itself to all the possible varieties of the human mind. Some passions and vices are but thinly scattered among mankind, and find only here

and there a fitness of reception. But prejudice, like the spider, makes every where its home. It has neither taste nor choice of place, and all that it requires is room. There is scarcely a situation except fire or water in which a spider will not live. So, let the mind be as naked as the walls of an empty and forsaken tenement, gloomy as a dungeon, or ornamented with the richest abilities of thinking, let it be hot, cold, dark or light, lonely or inhabited, still prejudice, if undisturbed, will fill it with cobwebs, and live, like the spider, where there seems nothing to live on. If the one prepares her food by poisoning it to her palate and her use, the other does the same; and as several of our passions are strongly characterized by the animal world, prejudice may be denominated the spider of the mind.

Perhaps no two events ever united so intimately and forcibly to combat and expel prejudice, as the Revolution of America and the Alliance with France. Their effects are felt, and their influence already extends as well to the old world as the new. Our style and manner of thinking have undergone a revolution, more extraordinary than the political revolution of the country. We see with other eyes; we hear with other ears; and think with other thoughts than those we formerly used. We can look back on our prejudices, as if they had been the prejudices of other people. We now see and know they were prejudices and nothing else; and relieved from their shackles, enjoy a freedom of mind, we felt not before. It was not all the argument, however powerful, nor all the reasoning, however eloquent, that could have produced this change, so necessary to the extension of the mind and the cordiality of the world, without the two circumstances of the Revolution and the Alliance.

Had America dropped quietly from Britain, no material change in sentiment had taken place. The same notions, prejudices, and conceits would have governed in both

countries as governed them before, and still the slaves of error and education, they would have travelled on in the beaten track of vulgar and habitual thinking. But brought about by the means it has been, both with regard to ourselves, to France and England, every corner of the mind is swept of its cobwebs, poison and dust, and made fit for the reception of generous happiness.

Perhaps there never was an alliance on a broader basis, than that between America and France, and the progress of it is worth attending to. The countries had been enemies, not properly of themselves, but through the medium of England. They originally had no quarrel with each other, nor any cause for one, but what arose from the interest of England, and her arming America against France. At the same time, the Americans at a distance from, and unacquainted with the world, and tutored in all the prejudices which governed those who governed them, conceived it their duty to act as they were taught. In doing this, they expended their substance to make conquests, not for themselves but for their masters, who in return treated them as slaves.

A long succession of insolent severity, and the separation finally occasioned by the commencement of hostilities at Lexington, on the 19th of April, 1775, naturally produced a new disposition of thinking. As the mind closed itself towards England, it opened itself towards the world, and our prejudices like our oppressions underwent, though less observed, a mental examination: until we found the former as inconsistent with reason and benevolence, as the latter were repugnant to our civil and political rights.

While we were thus advancing by degrees into the wide field of extended humanity, the alliance with France was concluded. An alliance not formed for the mere purpose of a day, but on just and generous grounds, and with equal and mutual advantages; and the easy, affec-

tionate manner in which the parties have since communicated, has made it an alliance not of courts only but of countries. There is now an union of mind as well as of interest; and our hearts as well as our prosperity call on us to support it.

The people of England not having experienced this change, had likewise no idea of it. They were hugging to their bosoms the same prejudices we were trampling beneath our feet; and they expected to keep a hold upon America, by that narrowness of thinking which America disdained. What they were proud of, we despised; and this is a principal cause why all their negotiations, constructed on this ground, have failed. We are now really another people, and cannot again go back to ignorance and prejudice. The mind once enlightened cannot again become dark. There is no possibility, neither is there any term to express the supposition by, of the mind *un*knowing any thing it already knows; and therefore all attempts on the part of England, fitted to the former habit of America and on the expectation of their applying now, will be like persuading a seeing man to become blind, and a sensible one to turn an idiot. The first of which is unnatural and the other impossible.

As to the remark which the Abbé makes on the one country being a monarchy and the other a republic, it can have no essential meaning. Forms of government have nothing to do with treaties. The former are the internal police of the countries severally; the latter their external police jointly: and so long as each performs its part, we have no more right or business to know how the one or the other conducts its domestic affairs, than we have to inquire into the private concerns of a family.

But had the Abbé reflected for a moment, he would have seen, that courts, or the governing powers of all countries, be their forms what they may, are relatively

republics with each other. It is the first and true principle of alliance. Antiquity may have given precedence, and power will naturally create importance, but their equal right is never disputed. It may likewise be worthy of remarking, that a monarchical country can suffer nothing in its popular happiness by an alliance with a republican one; and republican governments have never been destroyed by their external connections, but by some internal convulsion or contrivance. France has been in alliance with the republic of Switzerland for more than two hundred years, and still Switzerland retains her original form of government as entire as if she had been allied with a republic like herself; therefore this remark of the Abbé should go for nothing. Besides it is best mankind should mix. There is ever something to learn, either of manners or principle; and it is by a free communication, without regard to domestic matters, that friendship is to be extended, and prejudice destroyed all over the world.

But notwithstanding the Abbé's high professions in favor of liberty, he appears sometimes to forget himself, or that his theory is rather the child of his fancy than of his judgment: for in almost the same instant that he censures the alliance, as not originally or sufficiently calculated for the happiness of mankind, he by a figure of implications accuses France for having acted so generously and unreservedly in concluding it. "Why did they," says he, meaning the court of France, "tie themselves down by an inconsiderate treaty to conditions with the Congress, which they might themselves have held in dependence by ample and regular supplies."

When an author undertakes to treat of public happiness, he ought to be certain that he does not mistake passion for right, nor imagination for principle. Principle, like truth, needs no contrivance. It will ever tell its own tale, and tell it the same way. But where this

is not the case, every page must be watched, recollected, and compared, like an invented story.

I am surprised at this passage of the Abbé. It means nothing or it means ill; and in any case it shows the great difference between speculative and practical knowledge. A treaty according to the Abbé's language would have neither duration nor affection;—it might have lasted to the end of the war, and then expired with it. But France, by acting in a style superior to the little politics of narrow thinking, has established a generous fame and won the love of a country she was before a stranger to. She had to treat with a people who thought as nature taught them; and, on her own part, she wisely saw, there was no present advantage to be obtained by unequal terms, which could balance the more lasting ones that might flow from a kind and generous beginning.

From this part the Abbé advances into the secret transactions of the two cabinets of Versailles and Madrid respecting the independence of America; through which I mean not to follow him. It is a circumstance sufficiently striking without being commented on, that the former union of America with Britain produced a power, which in her hands, was becoming dangerous to the world: And there is no improbability in supposing, that had the latter known as much of the strength of the former, before she began the quarrel as she has known since, that instead of attempting to reduce her to unconditional submission, she would have proposed to her the conquest of Mexico. But from the countries separately, Spain has nothing to apprehend, though from their union she had more to fear than any other power in Europe.

The part which I shall more particularly confine myself to, is that wherein the Abbé takes an opportunity of complimenting the British ministry with high encomi-

ums of admiration, on their rejecting the offered mediation of the court of Madrid in 1779.

It must be remembered that before Spain joined France in the war, she undertook the office of a mediator and made proposals to the British king and ministry so exceedingly favorable to their interest, that had they been accepted, would have become inconvenient, if not inadmissible, to America. These proposals were nevertheless rejected by the British cabinet; on which the Abbé says:

"It is in such a circumstance as this; it is in the time when noble pride elevates the soul superior to all terror: when nothing is seen more dreadful than the shame of receiving the law, and when there is no doubt or hesitation which to choose, between ruin and dishonor; it is then, that the greatness of a nation is displayed. I acknowledge however that men, accustomed to judge of things by the event, call great and perilous resolutions, heroism or madness, according to the good or bad success with which they have been attended. If then, I should be asked, what is the name which shall in years to come be given to the firmness, which was in this moment exhibited by the English, I shall answer that I do not know. But that which it deserves I know. I know that the annals of the world hold out to us but rarely, the august and majestic spectacle of a nation, which chooses rather to renounce its duration than its glory."

In this paragraph the conception is lofty and the expression elegant, but the coloring is too high for the original, and the likeness fails through an excess of graces. To fit the powers of thinking and the turn of language to the subject, so as to bring out a clear conclusion that shall hit the point in question and nothing else, is the true criterion of writing. But the greater part of the Abbé's writings (if he will pardon me the

remark) appear to me uncentral and burdened with variety. They represent a beautiful wilderness without paths, in which the eye is diverted by everything, without being particularly directed to any thing; and in which it is agreeable to be lost, and difficult to find the way out.

Before I offer any other remark on the spirit and composition of the above passage, I shall compare it with the circumstance it alludes to.

The circumstance then does not deserve the encomium. The rejection was not prompted by her fortitude but her vanity. She did not view it as a case of despair or even of extreme danger, and consequently the determination to renounce her duration rather than her glory, cannot apply to the condition of her mind. She had then high expectations of subjugating America, and had no other naval force against her than France; neither was she certain that rejecting the mediation of Spain would combine that power with France. New mediations might arise more favorable than those she had refused. But if they should not, and Spain should join, she still saw that it would only bring out her naval force against France and Spain, which was not wanted and could not be employed against America, and habits of thinking had taught her to believe herself superior to both.

But in any case to which the consequence might point, there was nothing to impress her with the idea of renouncing her duration. It is not the policy of Europe to suffer the extinction of any power, but only to lop off or prevent its dangerous increase. She was likewise freed by situation from the internal and immediate horrors of invasion; was rolling in dissipation and looking for conquests; and though she suffered nothing but the expense of war, she still had a greedy eye to magnificent reimbursement.

But if the Abbé is delighted with high and striking

singularities of character, he might, in America, have found ample field for encomium. Here was a people, who could not know what part the world would take, for or against them; and who were venturing on an untried scheme, in opposition to a power, against which more formidable nations had failed. They had every thing to to learn but the principles which supported them, and every thing to procure that was necessary for their defence. They have at times seen themselves as low as distress could make them, without showing the least decrease of fortitude: and been raised again by the most unexpected events, without discovering an unmanly discomposure of joy. To hesitate or to despair are conditions equally unknown in America. Her mind was prepared for every thing; because her original and final resolution of succeeding or perishing, included all possible circumstances.

The rejection of the British propositions in the year 1778, circumstanced as America was at that time, is a far greater instance of unshaken fortitude than the refusal of the Spanish mediation by the Court of London: and other historians besides the Abbé, struck with the vastness of her conduct therein, have, like himself, attributed it to a circumstance which was then unknown, the alliance with France. Their error shows the idea of its greatness; because, in order to account for it, they have sought a cause suited to its magnitude, without knowing that the cause existed in the principles of the country.*

But this passionate encomium of the Abbé is deservedly

* Extract from *A short Review of the Present Reign* in England, page 45 in the *New Annual Register* for year 1780.

"The Commissioners who, in consequence of Lord North's conciliatory bills, went over to America, to propose terms of peace to the colonies, were wholly unsuccessful. The concessions which formerly would have been received with the utmost gratitude, were rejected with disdain. Now was the time of American pride and haughtiness. It is probable, however, that it was not pride and haughtiness alone that dictated the Resolutions of Congress, but a distrust of the sincerity of the offers of Britain, a determination not to give up their independence, and, above all, the engagements into which they had entered by their late treaty with France."

subject to moral and philosophical objections.. It is the effusion of wild thinking, and has a tendency to prevent that humanity of reflection which the criminal conduct of Britain enjoins on her as a duty. It is a laudanum to courtly iniquity. It keeps in intoxicated sleep the conscience of a nation; and more mischief is effected by wrapping up guilt in splendid excuse, than by directly patronizing it.

Britain is now the only country which holds the world in disturbance and war; and instead of paying compliments to the excess of her crimes, the Abbé would have appeared much more in character, had he put to her, or to her monarch, this serious question—

Are there not miseries enough in the world, too difficult to be encountered, and too pointed to be borne, without studying to enlarge the list, and arming it with new destruction? Is life so very long that it is necessary, nay even a duty, to shake the sand and hasten out the period of duration? Is the path so elegantly smooth, so decked on every side and carpeted with joys, that wretchedness is wanted to enrich it as a soil? Go ask thine aching heart when sorrow from a thousand causes wounds it; go ask thy sickened self when every medicine fails, whether this be the case or not?

Quitting my remarks on this head, I proceed to another, in which the Abbé has let loose a vein of ill-nature, and, what is still worse, of injustice.

After cavilling at the treaty, he goes on to characterize the several parties combined in the war.—"Is it possible," says the Abbé, "that a strict union should long subsist amongst confederates of characters so opposite as the hasty, light, disdainful Frenchman, the jealous, haughty, sly, slow, circumspective Spaniard, and the American, who is secretly snatching looks at the mother country, and would rejoice, were they compatible with his independence, at the disasters of his allies?"

To draw foolish portraits of each other is a mode of attack and reprisal, which the greater part of mankind are fond of indulging. The serious philosopher should be above it, more especially in cases from which no possible good can arise, and mischief may, and where no received provocation can palliate the offence. The Abbé might have invented a difference of character for every country in the world, and they in return might find others for him, till in the war of wit all real character is lost. The pleasantry of one nation or the gravity of another may, by a little pencilling, be distorted into whimsical features, and the painter become as much laughed at as the painting.

But why did not the Abbé look a little deeper, and bring forth the excellencies of the several parties? Why did he not dwell with pleasure on that greatness of character, that superiority of heart, which has marked the conduct of France in her conquests, and which has forced an acknowledgment even from Britain?

There is one line, at least (and many others might be discovered) in which the confederates unite; which is, that of a rival eminence in their treatment of their enemies. Spain, in her conquest of Minorca and the Bahama Islands, confirms this remark. America has been invariable in her lenity from the beginning of the war, notwithstanding the high provocations she has experienced. It is England only who has been insolent and cruel.

But why must America be charged with a crime undeserved by her conduct, more so by her principles, and which, if a fact, would be fatal to her honor? I mean that of want of attachment to her allies, or rejoicing in their disasters. She, it is true, has been assiduous in showing to the world that she was not the aggressor towards England: that the quarrel was not of her seeking, or, at that time, even of her wishing.* But to draw

inferences from her candor, and even from her justification to stab her character by, and I see nothing else from which they can be supposed to be drawn, is unkind and unjust.

Does her rejection of the British propositions in 1778, before she knew of any alliance with France, correspond with the Abbé's description of her mind? Does a single instance of her conduct since that time justify it? But there is a still better evidence to apply to, which is, that of all the mails which at different times have been waylaid on the road, in divers parts of America, and taken and carried into New York, and from which the most secret and confidential private letters, as well as those from authority, have been published, not one of them, I repeat it, not a single one of them, gives countenance to such a charge.

This is not a country where men are under government restraint in speaking; and if there is any kind of restraint, it arises from a fear of popular resentment. Now, if nothing in her private or public correspondence favors such a suggestion, and if the general disposition of the country is such as to make it unsafe for a man to show an appearance of joy at any disaster to her ally, on what grounds, I ask, can the accusation stand? What company the Abbé may have kept in France, we cannot know; but this we know, that the account he gives does not apply to America.

Had the Abbé been in America at the time the news arrived of the disaster of the fleet under Count de Grasse, in the West Indies, he would have seen his vast mistake. Neither do I remember any instance, except the loss of Charleston, in which the public mind suffered more severe and pungent concern, or underwent more agitations of hope and apprehension, as to the truth or falsehood of the report. Had the loss been all our own, it could not have had a deeper effect, yet it was not one of these cases which reached to the independence of America.

In the geographical account which the Abbé gives of the thirteen States, he is so exceedingly erroneous, that to attempt a particular refutation, would exceed the limits I have prescribed to myself. And as it is a matter neither political, historical, or sentimental, and which can always be contradicted by the extent and natural circumstances of the country, I shall pass it over; with this additional remark, that I never yet saw an European description of America that was true, neither can any person gain a just idea of it, but by coming to it.

Though I have already extended this letter beyond what I at first proposed, I am, nevertheless, obliged to omit many observations I originally designed to have made. I wish there had been no occasion for making any. But the wrong ideas which the Abbé's work had a tendency to excite, and the prejudicial impressions they might make, must be an apology for my remarks, and the freedom with which they are made.

I observe the Abbé has made a sort of epitome of a considerable part of the pamphlet *Common Sense*, and introduced it in that form into his publication. But there are other places where the Abbé has borrowed freely from the same pamphlet, without acknowledging it. — The difference between society and government, with which the pamphlet opens, is taken from it, and in some expressions almost literally, into the Abbé's work, as if originally his own; and through the whole of the Abbé's remarks on this head, the idea in *Common Sense* is so closely copied and pursued, that the difference is only in words, and in the arrangement of the thoughts themselves.*

* COMMON SENSE.

"Some writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas, they are not only different, but have different origins."

"Society is produced by our wants and governments by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness *positively*, by uniting our affections; the latter *negatively*, by restraining our vices."

ABBÉ RAYNAL.

"Care must be taken not to confound together society with government. That they may be known distinctly, their origin should be considered."

"Society originates in the wants of men, government in their vices. Society tends always to good; government ought always to tend to the repressing of evil."

But as it is time I should come to a conclusion of my letter, I shall forbear all further observations on the Abbé's work, and take a concise view of the state of public affairs, since the time in which that performance was published.

A mind habited to actions of meanness and injustice, commits them without reflection, or with a very partial one; for on what other ground than this, can we account for the declaration of war against the Dutch? To gain an idea of the politics which actuated the British Ministry to this measure, we must enter into the opinion which

In the following paragraphs there is less likeness in the language, but the ideas in the one are evidently copied from the other.

COMMON SENSE.

"In order to gain a clear and just idea of the design and end of government, let us suppose a small number of persons, meeting in some sequestered part of the earth unconnected with the rest; they will then represent the peopling of any country or of the world. In this state of natural liberty, society will be their first thought. A thousand motives will excite them thereto. The strength of one man is so unequal to his wants, and his mind so unfitted for perpetual solitude, that he is soon obliged to seek assistance of another, who, in his turn, requires the same. Four or five united would be able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the midst of a wilderness; but *one* man might labor out the common period of life, without accomplishing any thing; when he had felled his timber, he could not remove it, nor erect it after it was removed; hunger, in the mean time would urge him from his work, and every different want call him a different way. Disease, nay even misfortune, would be death; for though neither might be immediately mortal, yet either of them would disable him from living, and reduce him to a state in which he might rather be said to perish than to die.—Thus necessity, like a gravitating power, would form our newly arrived emigrants into society, the reciprocal blessings of which would supercede and render the obligations of law and government unnecessary, while they remained perfectly just to each other. But as nothing but heaven is impregnable to vice, it will unavoidably happen, that in proportion as they surmount the first difficulties of emigration, which bound them together in a common cause, they will begin to relax in their duty and attachment to each other, and this remissness will point out the necessity of establishing some form of government to supply the defect of moral virtue."

ABBÉ RAYNAL.

"Man, thrown as it were, by chance upon the globe, surrounded by all the evils of nature, obliged continually to defend and protect his life against the storms and tempests of the air, against the inundations of water, against the fire of volcanoes, against the intemperance of frigid and torrid zones, against the sterility of the earth which refuses him ailment, or its baneful fecundity, which makes poison spring up beneath his feet; in short, against the claws and teeth of savage beasts, who dispute with him his habitation and his prey, and, attacking his person, seem resolved to render themselves rulers of this globe, of which he thinks himself to be the master: man, in this state, alone and abandoned to himself, could do nothing for his preservation. It was necessary, therefore, that he should unite himself, and associate with his like, in order to bring together their strength and intelligence in common stock. It is by this union that he has triumphed over so many evils, that he has fashioned this globe to his use, restrained the rivers, subjugated the seas, insured his subsistence, conquered a part of the animals in obliging them to serve him, and driven others far from his empire, to the depth of deserts or of woods, where their number diminishes from age to age. What a man alone would not have been able to effect, men have executed in concert; and altogether they preserve their work. Such is the origin, such the advantages, and the end of society.—Government owes its birth to the necessity of preventing and repressing the injuries which the associated individuals had to fear from one another. It is the sentinel who watches, in order that the common laborers be not disturbed."

they, and the English in general, had formed of the temper of the Dutch nation; and from thence infer what their expectation of the consequences would be.

Could they have imagined that Holland would have seriously made a common cause with France, Spain, and America, the British Ministry would never have dared to provoke them. It would have been a madness in politics to have done so; unless their views were to hasten on a period of such emphatic distress, as should justify the concessions which they saw they must one day or other make to the world, and for which they wanted an apology to themselves.—There is a temper in some men which seeks a pretence for submission. Like a ship disabled in action, and unfitted to continue it, it waits the approach of a still larger one to strike to, and feels relief at the opportunity. Whether this is greatness or littleness of mind, I am not inquiring into. I should suppose it to be the latter, because it proceeds from the want of knowing how to bear misfortune in its original state.

But the subsequent conduct of the British cabinet has shown that this was not their plan of politics, and consequently their motives must be sought for in another line.

The truth is, that the British had formed a very humble opinion of the Dutch nation. They looked on them as a people who would submit to any thing; that they might insult them as they liked, plunder them as they pleased, and still the Dutch dared not to be provoked.

If this be taken as the opinion of the British cabinet, the measure is easily accounted for, because it goes on the supposition, that when, by a declaration of hostilities, they had robbed the Dutch of some millions sterling, (and to rob them was popular), they could make peace with them again whenever they pleased, and on almost any terms the British Ministry should propose. And no sooner was the plundering committed, than the accommodation was set on foot, and failed.

When once the mind loses the sense of its own dignity, it loses, likewise, the ability of judging of it in another. And the American war has thrown Britain into such a variety of absurd situations, that arguing from herself, she sees not in what conduct national dignity consists in other countries. From Holland she expected duplicity and submission, and this mistake arose from her having acted, in a number of instances during the present war, the same character herself.

To be allied to, or connected with Britain, seems to be an unsafe and impolitic situation. Holland and America are instances of the reality of this remark. Make those countries the allies of France or Spain, and Britain will court them with civility, and treat them with respect; make them her own allies, and she will insult and plunder them. In the first case, she feels some apprehensions at offending them, because they have support at hand; in the latter, those apprehensions do not exist. Such, however, has hitherto been her conduct.

Another measure which has taken place since the publication of the Abbé's work, and likewise since the time of my beginning this letter, is the change in the British Ministry. What line the new cabinet will pursue respecting America, is at this time unknown; neither is it very material, unless they are seriously disposed to a general and honorable peace.

Repeated experience has shown, not only the impracticability of conquering America, but the still higher impossibility of conquering the mind, or recalling her back to her former condition of thinking. Since the commencement of the war, which is now approaching to eight years, thousands and tens of thousands have advanced, and are daily advancing into the first stage of manhood, who know nothing of Britain but as a barbarous enemy, and to whom the independence of America appears as much the natural and established government

of the country, as that of England does to an Englishman. And on the other hand, thousands of the aged, who had British ideas, have dropped and are daily dropping, from the stage of business and life. The natural progress of generation and decay operates every hour to the disadvantage of Britain. Time and death, hard enemies to contend with, fight constantly against her interest; and the bills of mortality, in every part of America, are the thermometers of her decline. The children in the streets are from their cradle bred to consider her as their only foe. They hear of her cruelties; of their fathers, uncles, and kindred killed; they see the remains of burnt and destroyed houses, and the common tradition of the school they go to, tells them, *those things were done by the British.*

These are circumstances which the mere English state politician, who considers man only in a state of manhood, does not attend to. He gets entangled with parties coeval or equal with himself at home, and thinks not how fast the rising generation in America is growing beyond his knowledge of them, or they of him. In a few years all personal remembrance will be lost, and who is king or minister in England, will be little known, and scarcely inquired after.

The new British administration is composed of persons who have ever been against the war, and who have constantly reprobated all the violent measures of the former one. They considered the American war as destructive to themselves, and opposed it on that ground. But what are these things to America? She has nothing to do with English parties. The ins and outs are nothing to her. It is the whole country she is at war with, or must be at peace with.

Were every minister in England a *Chatham*, it would now weigh little or nothing in the scale of American politics. Death has preserved to the memory of this

statesman, *that fame*, which he, by living, would have lost. His plans and opinions, towards the latter part of his life, would have been attended with as many evil consequences, and as much reprobated here, as those of Lord North; and considering him a wise man, they abound with inconsistencies amounting to absurdities.

It has apparently been the fault of many in the late minority, to suppose, that America would agree to certain terms with them, were they in place, which she would not ever listen to from the then administration. This idea can answer no other purpose than to prolong the war; and Britain may, at the expense of many more millions, learn the fatality of such mistakes. If the new ministry wisely avoid this hopeless policy, they will prove themselves better pilots, and wiser men than they are conceived to be; for it is every day expected to see their bark strike upon some hidden rock, and go to pieces.

But there is a line in which they may be great. A more brilliant opening needs not to present itself; and it is such a one, as true magnanimity would improve, and humanity rejoice in.

A total reformation is wanted in England. She wants an expanded mind,—a heart which embraces the universe. Instead of shutting herself up in an island, and quarrelling with the world, she would derive more lasting happiness, and acquire more real riches, by generously mixing with it, and bravely saying, I am the enemy of none. It is not now a time for little contrivances, or artful politics. The European world is too experienced to be imposed upon, and America too wise to be duped. It must be something new and masterly that must succeed. The idea of seducing America from her independence, or corrupting her from her alliance, is a thought too little for a great mind, and impossible for any honest one to attempt. Whenever politics are applied to debauch mankind from their integrity, and dissolve the

virtues of human nature, they become detestable, and to be a statesman upon this plan, is to be a commissioned villain. He who aims at it, leaves a vacancy in his character, which may be filled up with the worst of epithets.

If the disposition of England should be such as not to agree to a general and honorable peace, and that the war most, at all events, continue longer, I cannot help wishing that the alliances which America has or may enter into, may become the only objects of the war. She wants an opportunity of showing to the world, that she holds her honor as dear and sacred as her independence, and that she will in no situation forsake those, whom no negotiations could induce to forsake her. Peace to every reflective mind is a desirable object; but that *peace* which is accompanied with a ruined character, becomes a crime to the seducer, and a curse upon the seduced.

But where is the impossibility, or even the great difficulty of England forming a friendship with France and Spain, and making it a national virtue to renounce for ever those prejudiced inveteracies it has been her custom to cherish; and which, while they serve to sink her with an increasing enormity of debt, by involving her in fruitless wars, become likewise the bane of her repose, and the destruction of her manners. We had once the fetters that she has now, but experience has shown us the mistake, and thinking justly has set us right.

The true idea of a great nation is that which extends and promotes the principles of universal society; whose mind rises above the atmospheres of local thoughts, and considers mankind, of whatever nation or profession they may be, as the work of one Creator. The rage for conquest has had its fashion and its day. Why may not the amiable virtues have the same? The Alexanders and Cæsars of antiquity have left behind them their monuments of destruction, and are remembered with hatred;

while those more exalted characters, who first taught society and science, are blest with the gratitude of every age and country. Of more use was *one* philosopher, though a heathen, to the world, than all the heathen conquerors that ever existed.

Should the present revolution be distinguished by opening a new system of extended civilization, it will receive from heaven the highest evidence of approbation; and as this is a subject to which the Abbé's powers are so eminently suited, I recommend it to his attention, with the affection of a friend, and the ardor of a universal citizen.

POSTSCRIPT.

Since closing the foregoing letter, some intimations respecting a general peace have made their way to America. On what authority or foundation they stand, or how near or remote such an event may be, are circumstances I am not inquiring into. But as the subject must sooner or later become a matter of serious attention, it may not be improper, even at this early period, candidly to investigate some points that are connected with it, or lead towards it.

The independence of America is at this moment as firmly established as that of any other country in a state of war. It is not length of time, but power that gives stability. Nations at war know nothing of each other on the score of antiquity. It is their present and immediate strength, together with their connections, that must support them. To which we may add, that a right which originated to-day, is as much a right, as if it had the sanction of a thousand years; and therefore the independence and present governments of America

are in no more danger of being subverted, because they are modern, than that of England is secure, because it is ancient.

The politics of Britain, so far as they respected America, were originally conceived in idiotism, and acted in madness. There is not a step which bears the smallest trace of rationality. In her management of the war, she has labored to be wretched, and studied to be hated; and in all her former propositions for accommodation, she has discovered a total ignorance of mankind, and of those natural and unalterable sensations by which they are so generally governed. How she may conduct herself in the present or future business of negotiating a peace, is yet to be proved.

He is a weak politician who does not understand human nature, and penetrate into the effect which measures of government will have upon the mind. All the miscarriages of Britain have arisen from this defect. The former ministry acted as if they supposed mankind, to be *without a mind;* and the present ministry, as if America was *without a memory.* The one must have supposed we were incapable of feeling; and the other, that we could not remember injuries.

There is likewise another line in which politicians mistake, which is that of not rightly calculating, or rather of misjudging, the consequence which any given circumstance will produce. Nothing is more frequent, as well in common as in political life, than to hear people complain, that such or such means produced an event directly contrary to their intentions. But the fault lies in their not judging rightly what the event would be; for the means produced only its proper and natural consequence.

It is very probable that in a treaty of peace, Britain will contend for some post or other in North America, perhaps Canada or Halifax, or both: And I infer this

from the known deficiency of her politics, which have ever yet made use of means, whose natural event was against both her interest and her expectation. But the question with her ought to be, whether it is worth her while to hold them, and what will be the consequences.

Respecting Canada, one or other of the two following will take place, *viz.* If Canada should become populous, it will revolt ; and if it does not become so, it will not be worth the expense of holding. And the same may be said of Halifax, and the country round it. But Canada *never will* be populous ; neither is there any occasion for contrivances on one side or the other, for nature alone will do the whole.

Britain may put herself to great expenses in sending settlers to Canada : but the descendants of those settlers will be Americans, as other descendants have been before them. They will look round and see the neighboring states sovereign and free, respected abroad and trading at large with the world ; and the natural love of liberty, the advantages of commerce, the blessings of independence, and of a happier climate, and a richer soil, will draw them southward ; and the effect will be, that Britain will sustain the expense, and America reap the advantage.

One would think that the experience which Britain has had of America, would entirely sicken her of all thoughts of continental colonization, and any part which she might retain, will only become to her a field of jealousy and thorns, of debate and contention, for ever struggling for privileges, and meditating revolt. She may form new settlements, but they will be for us ; they will become part of the United States of America ; and that against all her contrivances to prevent it, or without any endeavors of ours to promote it. In the first place she cannot draw from them a revenue, until they are able to pay one, and when they are so, they will be above

subjection. Men soon become attached to the soil they live upon, and incorporated with the prosperity of the place : and it signifies but little what opinions they come over with, for time, interest, and new connections will render them obsolete, and the next generation know nothing of them.

Were Britain truly wise, she would lay hold of the present opportunity to disentangle herself from all continental embarrassments in North America, and that not only to avoid future broils and troubles, but to save expenses. To speak explicitly on the matter, I would not, were I an European power, have Canada, under the condition that Britain must retain it, could it be given to me. It is one of those kind of dominions that is and ever will be, a constant charge upon any foreign holder.

As to Halifax, it will become useless to England after the present war, and the loss of the United States. A harbor, when the dominion is gone, for the purpose of which only it was wanted, can be attended only with expense. There are, I doubt not, thousands of people in England, who suppose, that these places are a profit to the nation, whereas they are directly the contrary, and instead of producing any revenue, a considerable part of the revenue of England is annually drawn off, to support the expense of holding them.

Gibraltar is another instance of national ill-policy. A post which in time of peace is not wanted, and in time of war is of no use, must at all times be useless. Instead of affording protection to a navy, it requires the aid of one to maintain it. To suppose that Gibraltar commands the Mediterranean, or the pass into it, or the trade of it, is to suppose a detected falsehood ; because though Britain holds the post, she has lost the other three, and every benefit she expected from it. And to say that all this happens because it is besieged by land and water, is to say nothing, for this will always be the

case in time of war, while France and Spain keep up superior fleets, and Britain holds the place. So that, though, as an impenetrable, inacessible rock, it may be held by the one, it is always in the power of the other to render it useless and excessively chargeable.

I should suppose that one of the principal objects of Spain in besieging it, is to show to Britain, that though she may not take it, she can command it, that is she can shut it up, and prevent its being used as a harbor, though not as a garrison. But the short way to reduce Gibraltar is to attack the British fleet; for Gibraltar is as dependent on a fleet for support, as a bird is on its wing for food, and when wounded there, it starves.

There is another circumstance which the people of England have not only not attended to, but seem to be utterly ignorant of, and that is, the difference between permanent power and accidental power, considered in a national sense.

By permanent power, I mean, a natural, inherent and perpetual ability in a nation, which though always in being, may not be always in action, or not always advantageously directed; and by accidental power, I mean, a fortunate or accidental disposition or exercise of national strength, in whole or in part.

There undoubtedly was a time when any one European nation, with only eight or ten ships of war, equal to the present ships of the line, could have carried terror to all others, who had not begun to build a navy, however great their natural ability might be for that purpose. But this can be considered only as accidental, and not as a standard to compare permanent power by, and could last no longer than until those powers built as many or more ships than the former. After this a larger fleet would be necessary, in order to be superior; and a still larger would again supersede it. And thus mankind have gone on building fleet upon fleet, as occasion or situation

dictated. And this reduces it to an original question, which is : Which power can build and man the largest number of ships? The natural answer to which, is, that power which has the largest revenue and the greatest number of inhabitants, provided its situation of coast affords sufficient conveniences.

France being a nation on the continent of Europe, and Britain an island in its neighborhood, each of them derived different ideas from their different situations. The inhabitants of Britain could carry on no foreign trade, nor stir from the spot they dwelt upon, without the assistance of shipping : but this was not the case with France. The idea therefore of a navy did not arise to France from the same original and immediate necessity which produced it to England. But the question is, that when both of them turn their attention, and employ their revenues the same way, which can be superior?

The annual revenue of France is nearly double that of England, and her number of inhabitants more than twice as many. Each of them has the same length of coast on the channel, besides which, France has several hundred miles extent on the Bay of Biscay, and an opening on the Mediterranean. And every day proves that practice and exercise make sailors as well as soldiers in one country as well as another.

If then Britain can maintain an hundred ships of the line, France can as well support an hundred and fifty, because her revenues and her population are as equal to the one, as those of England are to the other. And the only reason why she has not done so, is because she has not till very lately attended to it. But when she sees, as she now does, that a navy is the first engine of power, she can easily accomplish it.

England very falsely, and ruinously for herself, infers, that because she had the advantage of France, while France had a smaller navy, that for that reason it is

always to be so. Whereas it may be clearly seen, that the strength of France has never yet been tried on a navy, and that she is able to be as superior to England in the extent of a navy, as she is in the extent of her revenues and her population. And England may lament the day when, by her insolence and injustice, she provoked in France a maritime disposition.

It is in the power of the combined fleets to conquer every island in the West Indies, and reduce all the British navy in those places. For were France and Spain to send their whole naval force in Europe to those islands, it would not be in the power of Britain to follow them with an equal force. She would still be twenty or thirty ships inferior, were she to send every vessel she had; and in the mean time all the foreign trade of England would lay exposed to the Dutch.

It is a maxim, which, I am persuaded, will ever hold good, and more especially in naval operations, that a great power ought never to move in detachments, if it can possibly be avoided; but to go with its whole force to some important object, the reduction of which shall have a decisive effect upon the war. Had the whole of the French and Spanish fleets in Europe come last spring to the West Indies, every island had been their own, Rodney their prisoner, and his fleet their prize. From the United States the combined fleets can be supplied with provisions, without the necessity of drawing them from Europe, which is not the case with England.

Accident has thrown some advantages in the way of England, which, from the inferiority of her navy, she had not a right to expect. For though she had been obliged to fly before the combined fleets, yet Rodney has twice had the fortune to fall in with detached squadrons, to which he was superior in numbers: The first off Cape St. Vincent, where he had nearly two to one; and the other in the West Indies, where he had a majority of six

ships. Victories of this kind almost produce themselves. They are won without honor, and suffered without disgrace; and are ascribable to the chance of meeting, not to the superiority of fighting: For the same Admiral, under whom they were obtained, was unable, in three former engagements, to make the least impression on a fleet consisting of an equal number of ships with his own, and compounded for the events by declining the actions.*

To conclude, if it may be said that Britain has numerous enemies, it likewise proves that she has given numerous offences. Insolence is sure to provoke hatred, whether in a nation or an individual. The want of manners in the British Court may be seen even in its birth-days, and new-years' odes, which are calculated to infatuate the vulgar, and disgust the man of refinement; and her former overbearing rudeness, and insufferable injustice on the seas, have made every commercial nation her foe. Her fleets were employed as engines of prey; and acted on the surface of the deep the character which the shark does beneath it. On the other hand, the combined Powers are taking a popular part, and will render their reputation immortal, by establishing the perfect freedom of the ocean, to which all countries have a right, and are interested in accomplishing. The sea is the world's highway; and he who arrogates a prerogative over it, transgressses the right, and justly brings on himself the chastisement of nations.

Perhaps it might be of some service to the future tranquillity of mankind, were an article introduced into the next general peace, that no one nation should, in time of peace, exceed a certain number of ships of war. Something of this kind seems necessary; for, according to the present fashion, half the world will get upon the water,

* See the accounts, either English or French, of three actions in the West Indies between Count de Guichen, and Admiral Rodney, in 1780.

and there appears to be no end to the extent to which navies may be carried. Another reason is, that navies add nothing to the manners of morals of a people. The sequestered life which attends the service, prevents the opportunities of society, and is too apt to occasion a coarseness of ideas and of language; and that more in ships of war than in the commercial employ, because in the latter they mix more with the world and are nearer related to it. I mention this remark as a general one, and it does not apply to any one country more than to another.

Britain has now had the trial of above seven years, with an expense of nearly a hundred million pounds sterling; and every month in which she delays to conclude a peace, costs her another million sterling over and above her ordinary expenses of government, which are a million more; so that her total *monthly* expense is two million pounds sterling, which is equal to the whole *yearly* expense of America, all charges included. Judge then who is best able to continue it.

She has likewise many atonements to make to an injured world, as well in one quarter as another. And instead of pursuing that temper of arrogance, which serves only to sink her in the esteem, and entail on her the dislike of all nations, she will do well to reform her manners, retrench her expenses, live peaceably with her neighbors, and think of war no more.

Philadelphia, August 21, 1782.

LETTER FROM THOMAS PAINE TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

Bordentown, Sept. 7, 1782.

SIR:

I HAVE the honor of presenting you with fifty copies of my *Letter to the Abbé Raynal*, for the use of the army, and to repeat to you my acknowledgments for your friendship.

I fully believe we have seen our worst days over. The spirit of the war, on the part of the enemy, is certainly on the decline, fully as much as we think for. I draw this opinion not only from the present promising appearance of things, and the difficulties we know the British cabinet is in; but I add to it the peculiar effect which certain periods of time have, more or less, upon all men.

The British have accustomed themselves to think of *seven years* in a manner different to other portions of time. They acquire this partly by habit, by reason, by religion, and by superstition. They serve seven years apprenticeship—they elect their parliament for seven years—they punish by seven years transportation, or the duplicate or triplicate of that term—they let their leases in the same manner, and they read that Jacob served seven years for one wife, and after that seven years for another; and this particular period of time, by a variety of concurrences, has obtained an influence in their mind.

They have now had seven years of war, and are no further on the Continent than when they began. The superstitious and credulous part will therefore conclude that *it is not to be*, and the rational part of them will think they have tried an unsuccessful and expensive project long enough, and by these two joining issue in the same eventual opinion, the obstinate part among them will be beaten out; unless, consistent with their former sagacity, they should get over the matter by an act of parliament, "*to bind* TIME *in all cases whatsoever*," *or declare him a rebel.*

I observe the affair of Captain Asgill seems to die away:—very probably it has been protracted on the part of Clinton and Carleton, to gain time to state the case to the British ministry, where, following close on that of Colonel Haynes, it will create new embarrassments to them. For my own part, I am fully persuaded that a suspension of his fate, still holding it *in terrorem*, will operate on a greater quantity of their passions and vices, and restrain them more than his execution would do. However, the change of measures which seems now to be taking place, gives somewhat of a new cast to former designs; and if the case, without the execution, can be so managed as to answer all the purposes of the latter, it will look much better hereafter, when the sensations that now provoke, and the circumstances that would justify his exit, shall be forgotten.

I am your Excellency's obliged
and obedient humble servant,
THOMAS PAINE.

His Excellency General Washington.

LETTER FROM GENERAL WASHINGTON TO THOMAS PAINE.

Headquarters Verplank's Point,
Sept. 18, 1782.

SIR:

I HAVE the pleasure to acknowledge your favor of the 7th inst., informing me of your proposal to present me with fifty copies of your last publication, for the amusement of the army.

For this intention you have my sincere thanks, not only on my own account, but for the pleasure, I doubt not, the gentlemen of the army will receive from the perusal of your pamphlets.

Your observations on the *period of seven years*, as it applies itself to, and affects British minds, are ingenious, and I wish it may not fail of its effects in the present instance. The measures, and the policy of the enemy, are at present in great perplexity and embarrassment—but I have my fears, whether their necessities (which are the only operative motive with them) are yet arrived to that point, which must drive them unavoidably into what they will esteem disagreeable and dishonorable terms of peace—such, for instance, as an absolute, unequivocal admission of American Independence, upon the terms on which she can alone accept it.

For this reason, added to the obstinacy of the king—and the probable consonant principles of some of his principal ministers, I have not so full a confidence in the success of the present negotiation for peace as some gentlemen entertain.

Should events prove my jealousies to be ill founded, I shall make myself happy under the mistake—consoling myself with the idea of having erred on the safest side, and enjoying with as much satisfaction as any of my countrymen, the pleasing issue of our severe contest.

The case of Captain Asgill has indeed been spun out to a great length—but, with you, I hope that its termination will not be unfavorable to this country.

I am, sir, with great esteem and regard,

Your most obedient servant,

G. WASHINGTON.

Thomas Paine, Esq.

RIGHTS OF MAN:

BEING AN

ANSWER TO MR. BURKE'S ATTACK

ON THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION.

BY

THOMAS PAINE.

SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO CONGRESS IN THE AMERICAN WAR, AND AUTHOR OF THE WORK ENTITLED "COMMON SENSE."

PART I.

NEW YORK:

PETER ECKLER PUBLISHING CO.

1017

TO

GEORGE WASHINGTON,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

SIR,

I PRESENT you a small treatise in defence of those principles of freedom which your exemplary virtue hath so eminently contributed to establish. That the Rights of Man may become as universal as your benevolence can wish, and that you may enjoy the happiness of seeing the New World regenerate the Old, is the prayer of

SIR,

Your much obliged, and

Obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

HISTORICAL PREFACE.*

THOMAS PAINE, author of the *Rights of Man*, was born in England of Quaker parents. On Franklin's representations he visited North America in 1774, and at Philadelphia edited the first literary magazine. Just at the crisis when England spurned the humble petitioners and breathed only war and revenge — when the first large armament was about to descend on the shores of the defenceless Colonies, and when all persons seriously asked, "What can be done?" and "What shall we do?" there appeared a small pamphlet from the pen of Thomas Paine under the title of *Common Sense*. The effect of this pamphlet was magical. The people had only *asked* for redress of grievances, but now they demanded independence; and in the same year, 1776, it was declared. Mr. Paine followed this pamphlet up by a series of tracts or pamphlets called *The Crisis*, and signed COMMON SENSE. He had the merit of *creating* a public opinion, and directing it to a successful issue.

In 1787 Mr. Paine returned to Europe, and presented to the scientific bodies of France and England his model of iron bridges, which have since been adopted. He mixed in the society of the leading literary and political men of both countries; and while thus situated, the elements of the first French revolution began to appear. Mr. Paine hastened to the scene of action, as an intelligent observer; and on this subject became the correspondent of Edmund Burke, then the most eloquent man in the House of Commons, and the champion of liberty. But Mr. Burke was at that time a secret pensioner. He had stipulated for a handsome pension for himself, for his wife in case she survived, and for his family after

*By GILBERT VALE, author of Vale's *Life of Paine*.

their death. This pension not being known to the pub lic at that time, to the surprise of all, the eloquent Mr. Burke changed his principles, and from being the warm supporter of America in her struggle for liberty, and the champion of the early efforts of the French in their revolution, he became the enemy of that revolution, and through that the supporter of corruption and the friend of the oppressor; but as Mr. Burke took advantage of some excesses in the French revolution to declare his change of opinion, he gave a coloring to this change which deceived even his personal friends. They gave him credit for sincerity, and when he announced his great work, Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*, it made a great impression on the public mind. The friends of liberty and human rights in both Ireland and England were mortified at the defection of Mr. Burke, and dejected at the success of his work, till Mr. Paine announced a reply. That reply was the *Rights of Man*, and popular as Mr. Burke's work was in its beginning, it stood no chance against Mr. Paine's. Where a thousand copies were sold of the one, ten thousand were sold of the other. Mr. Burke, before the publication of the *Rights of Man*, had promised a rejoinder, but he never attempted it, and Mr. Paine, after waiting a long time, published his SECOND PART.* The present work contains both; it is Mr. Paine's *chef d'œuvre* in politics. He has given it a broad basis on principle. It is a condensation of sound political principles, applicable at all times, besides being a reminiscence of England and France at those stirring times.

The work had an immense run and influence, and as it could not be bought up, it was honored with a series of prosecutions by the British government; but the same work procured for Mr. Paine an election to the French convention from three different places, and the highest honors were awarded him on his landing at Calais.

The *Rights of Man* has now become a standard work, and as such is presented to the American public.

*The first part of the *Rights of Man* was published by Mr. Jordan, No. 166 Fleet Street, London, on the 13th of March, 1791, and the second part on the 16th of February, 1792. The offer of £1,000 for the copyright of the second part by Mr. Chapman, the printer, was probably inspired by the English government, which strove to suppress the work, and this offer was promptly declined by Mr. Paine, who wrote for the benefit of mankind and not for a pecuniary reward.—PUB.

PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION.*

FROM the part Mr. Burke took in the American Revolution, it was natural that I should consider him a friend to mankind; and as our acquaintance commenced on that ground, it would have been more agreeable to me to have had cause to continue in that opinion, than to change it.

At the time Mr. Burke made his violent speech last winter in the English Parliament against the French Revolution and the National Assembly, I was in Paris, and had written to him but a short time before, to inform him how prosperously matters were going on. Soon after this, I saw his advertisement of the pamphlet he intended to publish. As the attack was to be made in a language but little studied, and less understood, in France, and as everything suffers by translation, I promised some of the friends of the Revolution in that country, that whenever Mr. Burke's pamphlet came forth, I would answer it. This appeared to me the more necessary to be done, when I saw the flagrant misrepresentations which Mr. Burke's pamphlet contains; and that while it is an outrageous abuse on the French Revolution, and the principles of Liberty, it is an imposition on the rest of the world.

* This preface, which appeared in the original edition of the *Rights of Man*, published in 1791, by J. S. Jordan, 166 Fleet Street, London, and also in subsequent English editions, has been excluded from all the American editions of Paine's works which I have been able to examine. As it gives Mr. Paine's reasons for writing the volume, and explains the circumstances which induced him to reply to Mr. Burke's sinister attack on the French Revolution, it is deemed of sufficient importance to warrant its insertion in the present edition, which is an exact reproduction of the original edition, **unaltered and unabridged.**—*Pub.*

I am the more astonished and disappointed at this conduct in Mr. Burke, as (from the circumstance I am going to mention), I had formed other expectations.

I had seen enough of the miseries of war to wish it might never more have existence in the world, and that some other mode might be found out to settle the differences that should occasionally arise in the neighborhood of nations. This certainly might be done if Courts were disposed to set honestly about it, or if countries were enlightened enough not to be made the dupes of Courts. The people of America had been bred up in the same prejudices against France, which at that time characterized the people of England ; but experience and an acquaintance with the French nation have most effectually shown to the Americans the falsehood of those prejudices ; and I do not believe that a more cordial and confidential intercourse exists between any two countries than between America and France.

When I came to France, in the Spring of 1787, the Archbishop of Thoulouse was then Minister, and at that time highly esteemed. I became much acquainted with the private Secretary of that Minister, a man of an enlarged benevolent heart ; and found that his sentiments and my own perfectly agreed with respect to the madness of war, and the wretched impolicy of two nations, like England and France, continually worrying each other, to no other end than that of a mutual increase of burdens and taxes. That I might be assured I had not misunderstood him, nor he me, I put the substance of our opinions into writing, and sent it to him ; subjoining a request, that if I should see among the people of England any disposition to cultivate a better understanding between the two nations than had hitherto prevailed, how far I might be authorized to say that the same disposition prevailed on the part of France? He answered me by letter in the most unreserved manner, and that not for

himself only, but for the Minister, with whose knowledge the letter was declared to be written.

I put this letter into the hands of Mr. Burke almost three years ago, and left it with him, where it still remains; hoping, and at the same time naturally expecting, from the opinion I had conceived of him, that he would find some opportunity of making a good use of it, for the purpose of removing those errors and prejudices, which two neighboring nations, from the want of knowing each other, had entertained, to the injury of both.

When the French Revolution broke out, it certainly afforded to Mr. Burke an opportunity of doing some good, had he been disposed to it; instead of which, no sooner did he see the old prejudices wearing away, than he immediately began sowing the seeds of a new inveteracy, as if he were afraid that England and France would cease to be enemies. That there are men in all countries who get their living by war, and by keeping up the quarrels of nations, is as shocking as it is true; but when those who are concerned in the government of a country, make it their study to sow discord, and cultivate prejudices between nations, it becomes the more unpardonable.

With respect to a paragraph in this work, alluding to Mr. Burke's having a pension, the report has been some time in circulation, at least two months; and as a person is often the last to hear what concerns him the most to know, I have mentioned it, that Mr. Burke may have an opportunity of contradicting the rumor, if he thinks proper.

THOMAS PAINE.

RIGHTS OF MAN.

PART FIRST.

AMONG the incivilities by which nations or individuals provoke and irritate each other, Mr. Burke's pamphlet on the French revolution is an extraordinary instance. Neither the people of France, nor the National Assembly, were troubling themselves about the affairs of England, or the English Parliament; and that Mr. Burke should commence an unprovoked attack upon them, both in Parliament and in public, is a conduct that cannot be pardoned on the score of manners, nor justified on that of policy.

There is scarcely an epithet of abuse to be found in the English language, with which Mr. Burke has not loaded the French nation and the National Assembly. Every thing which rancor, prejudice, ignorance, or knowledge could suggest, are poured forth in the copious fury of near four hundred pages. In the strain and on the plan Mr. Burke was writing, he might have written on to as many thousands. When the tongue or the pen is let loose in a frenzy of passion, it is the man and not the subject that becomes exhausted.*

*It is but simple justice to state that Burke's work, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, (which has become nearly obsolete,) fully deserves this caustic criticism of Mr. Paine.

By his liberal views in regard to the American Revolution, Mr. Burke had won the confidence of the friends of representative government in both Europe and America, but when he became a pensioner of the British Government, and advocated the despotic

Hitherto Mr. Burke has been mistaken and disappointed in the opinions he had formed of the affairs of France; but such is the ingenuity of his hope, or the malignancy of his despair, that it furnishes him with new pretences to go on. There was a time when it was impossible to make Mr. Burke believe there would be

views of the aristocratic classes, he speedily lost the influence and consideration he had previously enjoyed.

He based his sophistical argument in favor of hereditary government on the declaration of the English Parliament of 1688 to William and Mary, that—"The Lords spiritual and temporal and Commons, do, in the name of the people aforesaid, most humbly and faithfully submit themselves, their heirs and posterity forever,"—as though any people or parliament had the right or power to restrict, curtail, and control through succeeding ages the natural and inalienable rights and liberties of unborn millions. And, apparently not satisfied with this outrageous sophism, Mr. Burke further contends that the English people would take up arms to perpetuate this aristocratic system of usurpation forever.

Mr. Paine contends that Burke never thoroughly understood the French Revolution, which excited his astonishment; "but," says Paine, "it is no more than the consequence of a mental revolution previously existing in France. The mind of the nation had changed beforehand, and the new order of things had naturally followed the new order of thoughts." These thoughts are to be found "in the writings of the French philosophers during these periods," and he mentions Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, the Abbé Raynal, Quesnay, Turgot, and their friends, as prominent revolutionary writers;—and to their works may be added the political writings of Paine, Jefferson, Franklin, and others in favor of representative government during and preceding the American Revolution.

Several of the reforms advocated by Mr. Paine were adopted by the English government on the first appearance of the *Rights of Man*, and the beneficent influence of this great work is still apparent at the present day. The subject of graduated taxation,—the attempt to lift the burden of taxation from the shoulders of the laboring classes and place it upon the wealthy members of the community where it really belongs,—may serve as an illustration of the fact. This measure, so ably advocated by Mr. Paine, has met the approval of many prominent political writers of the present day, who now echo with great volubility and apparent originality the views advanced by Thomas Paine one hundred years ago.

The world is undoubtedly indebted to Mr. Edmund Burke for the appearance of Paine's *Rights of Man*. Burke's ill-advised attack on the principles of the French Revolution was unquestionably the active, inciting cause—the impelling motive—for the appearance of Paine's greatest and grandest work; and for this reason, if for no other, the paid hireling of the British aristocracy—the talented, the eloquent, but weak and vacillating Burke—deserves at least our pity and remembrance.—*American Publisher.*

any revolution in France. His opinion then was, that the French had neither spirit to undertake it, nor fortitude to support it; and now that there is one, he seeks an escape by condemning it.

Not sufficiently content with abusing the National Assembly, a great part of his work is taken up with abusing Dr. Price (one of the best-hearted men that lives), and the two societies in England known by the name of the Revolution Society, and the Society for Constitutional Information.

Dr. Price had preached a sermon on the 4th of November, 1789, being the anniversary of what is called in England the Revolution, which took place in 1688. Mr. Burke, speaking of this sermon, says, "The political Divine proceeds dogmatically to assert that, by the principles of the Revolution, the people of England have acquired three fundamental rights:

"1. To choose our own governors.

"2. To cashier them for misconduct.

"3. To frame a government for ourselves."

Dr. Price does not say that the right to do these things exists in this or in that person, or in this or in that description of persons, but that it exists in the *whole;* that it is a right resident in the nation.—Mr. Burke, on the contrary, denies that such a right exists in the nation, either in whole or in part, or that it exists any where; and, what is still more strange and marvellous, he says, "that the people of England utterly disclaim such a right, and that they will resist the practical assertion of it with their lives and fortunes." That men should take up arms, and spend their lives and fortunes, *not* to maintain their rights, but to maintain they have *not* rights, is an entirely new species of discovery, and suited to the paradoxical genius of Mr. Burke.

The method which Mr. Burke takes to prove that the people of England have no such rights, and that such

rights do not now exist in the nation, either in whole or in part, or any where at all, is of the same marvelous and monstrous kind with what he has already said; for his arguments are, that the persons, or the generation of persons, in whom they did exist, are dead, and with them the right is dead also. To prove this, he quotes a declaration made by Parliament about a hundred years ago, to William and Mary, in these words: "The Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, do, in the name of the people aforesaid," (meaning the people of England then living) "most humbly and faithfully *submit* themselves, their *heirs* and *posterities*, for EVER." He also quotes a clause of another act of Parliament made in the same reign, the terms of which, he says, "bind us," (meaning the people of that day) "our *heirs* and our *posterity*, to *them*, their *heirs* and *posterity*, to the end of time."

Mr. Burke conceives his point sufficiently established by producing those clauses, which he enforces by saying that they exclude the right of the nation for *ever*. And not yet content with making such declarations, repeated over and over again, he further says, "that if the people of England possessed such a right before the Revolution," (which he acknowledges to have been the case, not only in England but throughout Europe, at an early period,) "yet that the *English nation* did, at the time of the Revolution, most solemnly renounce and abdicate it, for themselves, and for *all their posterity, for ever.*"

As Mr. Burke occasionally applies the poison drawn from his horrid principles, not only to the English nation, but to the French Revolution and the National Assembly, and charges that august, illuminated and illuminating body of men with the epithet of *usurpers*, I shall, *sans ceremonie*, place another system of principles in opposition to his.

The English Parliament of 1688 did a certain thing,

which, for themselves and their constituents, they had a right to do, and which it appeared right should be done: But, in addition to this right, which they possessed by delegation, *they set up another right by assumption*, that of binding and controlling posterity to the end of time. The case, therefore, divides itself into two parts; the right which they possessed by delegation, and the right which they set up by assumption. The first is admitted; but with respect to the second, I reply :—

There never did, there never will, and there never can exist a Parliament, or any description of men, or any generation of men, in any country, possessed of the right or the power of binding and controlling posterity to the "*end of time*," or of commanding forever how the world shall be governed, or who shall govern it; and therefore, all such clauses, acts or declarations, by which the makers of them attempt to do what they have neither the right nor the power to do, nor the power to execute, are in themselves null and void. Every age and generation must be as free to act for itself, *in all cases*, as the ages and generations which preceded it. The vanity and presumption of governing beyond the grave, is the most ridiculous and insolent of all tyrannies. Man has no property in man; neither has any generation a property in the generations which are to follow. The Parliament or the people of 1688, or of any other period, had no more right to dispose of the people of the present day, or to bind or to control them *in any shape whatever*, than the Parliament or the people of the present day have to dispose of, bind, or control those who are to live a hundred or a thousand years hence. Every generation is, and must be, competent to all the purposes which its occasions require. It is the living, and not the dead, that are to be accommodated. When man ceases to be, his power and his wants cease with him; and having no longer any participation in the concerns of this world, he

has no longer any authority in directing who shall be its governors, or how its government shall be organized, or how administered.

I am not contending for nor against any form of government, nor for nor against any party here or elsewhere. That which a whole nation chooses to do, it has a right to do. Mr. Burke says, No. Where then *does* the right exist? I am contending for the rights of the *living*, and against their being willed away, and controlled and contracted for, by the manuscript assumed authority of the dead; and Mr. Burke is contending for the authority of the dead over the rights and freedom of the living. There was a time when kings disposed of their crowns by will upon their death-beds, and consigned the people, like beasts of the field, to whatever successor they appointed. This is now so exploded as scarcely to be remembered, and so monstrous as hardly to be believed. But the parliamentary clauses upon which Mr. Burke builds his political church, are of the same nature.

The laws of every country must be analogous to some common principle. In England, no parent or master, nor all the authority of Parliament, omnipotent as it has called itself, can bind or control the personal freedom even of an individual beyond the age of twenty-one years. On what ground of right, then, could the Parliament of 1688, or any other Parliament, bind all posterity for ever?

Those who have quitted the world, and those who are not yet arrived at it, are as remote from each other, as the utmost stretch of moral imagination can conceive. What possible obligation, then, can exist between them; what rule or principle can be laid down, that two nonentities, the one out of existence, and the other not in, and who never can meet in this world, that the one should control the other to the end of time?

In England, it is said that money cannot be taken out of the pockets of the people without their consent. But

who authorized, or who could authorize the Parliament of 1688 to control and take away the freedom of posterity, and limit and confine their right of acting in certain cases for ever, who were not in existence to give or to withhold their consent?

A greater absurdity cannot present itself to the understanding of man, than what Mr. Burke offers to his readers. He tells them, and he tells the world to come, that a certain body of men, who existed a hundred years ago, made a law; and that there does not now exist in the nation, nor ever will, nor ever can, a power to alter it. Under how many subtilties, or absurdities, has the divine right to govern been imposed on the credulity of mankind! Mr. Burke has discovered a new one, and he has shortened his journey to Rome, by appealing to the power of this infallible Parliament of former days; and he produces what it has done, as of divine authority: for that power must certainly be more than human, which no human power to the end of time can alter.

But Mr. Burke has done some service, not to his cause, but to his country, by bringing those clauses into public view. They serve to demonstrate how necessary it is at all times to watch against the attempted encroachment of power, and to prevent its running to excess. It is somewhat extraordinary, that the offence for which James II. was expelled, that of setting up power by *assumption*, should be re-acted, under another shape and form, by the Parliament that expelled him. It shows that the rights of man were but imperfectly understood at the Revolution; for certain it is, that the right which that Parliament set up by *assumption* (for by the delegation it had it not, and could not have it, because none could give it) over the persons and freedom of posterity for ever, was of the same tyrannical unfounded kind which James attempted to set up over the Parliament and the nation, and for which he was expelled. The only difference is, (for in principle

they differ not) that the one was an usurper over the living, and the other over the unborn; and as the one has no better authority to stand upon than the other, both of them must be equally null and void, and of no effect.

From what, or from whence, does Mr. Burke prove the right of any human power to bind posterity for ever? He has produced his clauses; but he must produce also his proofs that such a right existed, and show how it existed. If it ever existed, it must now exist; for whatever appertains to the nature of man, cannot be annihilated by man. It is the nature of man to die, and he will continue to die as long as he continues to be born. But Mr. Burke has set up a sort of political Adam, in whom all posterity are bound for ever; he must therefore prove that his Adam possessed such a power, or such a right.

The weaker any cord is, the less will it bear to be stretched and the worse is the policy to stretch it, unless it is intended to break it. Had a person contemplated the overthrow of Mr. Burke's positions, he would have proceeded as Mr. Burke has done. He would have magnified the authorities, on purpose to have called the *right* of them into question; and the instant the question of right was started, the authorities must have been given up.

It requires but a very small glance of thought to perceive, that although laws made in one generation often continue in force through succeeding generations, yet they continue to derive their force from the consent of the living. A law not repealed continues in force, not because it *cannot* be repealed, but because it is *not* repealed; and the non-repealing passes for consent.

But Mr. Burke's clauses have not even this qualification in their favor. They become null, by attempting to become immortal. The nature of them precludes consent. They destroy the right which they *might* have,

by grounding it on a right which they *cannot* have. Immortal power is not a human right, and therefore cannot be a right of Parliament. The Parliament of 1688 might as well have passed an act to have authorized themselves to live for ever, as to make their authority live for ever. All therefore that can be said of them is, that they are a formality of words, of as much import, as if those who used them had addressed a congratulation to themselves, and in the oriental style of antiquity, had said, O Parliament, live for ever!

The circumstances of the world are continually changing, and the opinions of men change also; and as government is for the living, and not for the dead, it is the living only that has any right in it. That which may be thought right and found convenient in one age, may be thought wrong and found inconvenient in another. In such cases, who is to decide, the living, or the dead?

As almost one hundred pages of Mr. Burke's book are employed upon these clauses, it will consequently follow, that if the clauses themselves, so far as they set up an *assumed*, *usurped* dominion over posterity for ever, are unauthoritative, and in their nature null and void; that all his voluminous inferences, and declamation drawn therefrom, or founded thereon, are null and void also: and on this ground I rest the matter.

We now come more particularly to the affairs of France. Mr. Burke's book has the appearance of being written as instruction to the French nation; but if I may permit myself the use of an extravagant metaphor, suited to the extravagance of the case, it is darkness attempting to illuminate light.

While I am writing this, there are accidentally before me some proposals for a declaration of rights by the Marquis de la Fayette (I ask his pardon for using his former address, and do it only for distinction's sake) to the National Assembly, on the 11th of July, 1789, three

days before the taking of the Bastille, and I cannot but be struck by observing how opposite the sources are from which that gentleman and Mr. Burke draw their principles. Instead of referring to musty records and mouldy parchments to prove that the rights of the living are lost, "renounced and abdicated for ever," by those who are now no more, as Mr. Burke has done, M. de la Fayette applies to the living world, and emphatically says:— "Call to mind the sentiments which nature has engraved in the heart of every citizen, and which take a new force when they are solemnly recognized by all: For a nation to love liberty, it is sufficient that she knows it; and to be free, it is sufficient that she wills it." How dry, barren, and obscure is the source from which Mr. Burke labors! and how ineffectual, though gay with flowers, are all his declamation and his argument, compared with these clear, concise, and soul-animating sentiments! Few and short as they are, they lead on to a vast field of generous and manly thinking, and do not finish, like Mr. Burke's periods, with music in the ear, and nothing in the heart.

As I have introduced M. de la Fayette, I will take the liberty of adding an anecdote respecting his farewell address to the Congress of America in 1783, and which occurred fresh to my mind, when I saw Mr. Burke's thundering attack on the French Revolution. M. de la Fayette went to America at an early period of the war, and continued a volunteer in her service to the end. His conduct through the whole of that enterprise is one of the most extraordinary that is to be found in the history of a young man, scarcely then twenty years of age. Situated in a country that was like the lap of sensual pleasure, and with the means of enjoying it, how few are there to be found who would exchange such a scene for the woods and wilderness of America, and pass the flowery years of youth in unprofitable danger and hardship; but such is the

fact. When the war ended, and he was on the point of taking his final departure, he presented himself to Congress, and contemplating, in his affectionate farewell, the revolution he had seen, expressed himself in these words: "*May this great monument, raised to Liberty, serve as a lesson to the oppressor, and an example to the oppressed!*" When this address came to the hands of Dr. Franklin, who was then in France, he applied to Count Vergennes, to have it inserted in the French *Gazette*, but never could obtain his consent. The fact was, that Count Vergennes was an aristocratical despot at home, and dreaded the example of the American Revolution in France, as certain other persons now dread the example of the French Revolution in England; and Mr. Burke's tribute of fear, (for in this light his book must be considered) runs parallel with Count Vergennes' refusal. But, to return more particularly to his work.—

"We have seen," says Mr. Burke, "the French rebel against a mild and lawful monarch, with more fury, outrage, and insult, than any people has been known to rise against the most illegal usurper, or the most sanguinary tyrant." This is one among a thousand other instances, in which Mr. Burke shows that he is ignorant of the springs and principles of the French Revolution.

It was not against Louis XVI., but against the despotic principles of the government, that the nation revolted. These principles had not their origin in him, but in the original establishment, many centuries back; and they were become too deeply rooted to be removed, and the Augean stable of parasites and plunderers too abominably filthy to be cleansed, by anything short of a complete and universal revolution. When it becomes necessary to do a thing, the whole heart and soul should go into the measure, or not attempt it. That crisis was then arrived, and there remained no choice but to act with determined vigor, or not to act at all. The king was known

to be the friend of the nation, and this circumstance was favorable to the enterprise. Perhaps no man bred up in the style of an absolute King, ever possessed a heart so little disposed to the exercise of that species of power as the present King of France. But the principles of the government itself still remained the same The monarch and the monarchy were distinct and separate things; and it was against the established despotism of the latter, and not against the person or principles of the former, that the revolt commenced, and the revolution has been carried.

Mr. Burke does not attend to the distinction between *men* and *principles;* and therefore, he does not see that a revolt may take place against the despotism of the latter, while there lies no charge of despotism against the former.

The natural moderation of Louis XVI. contributed nothing to alter the hereditary despotism of the monarchy. All the tyrannies of former reigns, acted under that hereditary despotism, were still liable to be revived in the hands of a successor. It was not the respite of a reign that would satisfy France, enlightened as she was then become. A casual discontinuance of the *practice* of despotism, is not a discontinuance of its *principles;* the former depends on the virtue of the individual who is in immediate possession of the power; the latter, on the virtue and fortitude of the nation. In the case of Charles I. and James II. of England, the revolt was against the personal despotism of the men; whereas in France, it was against the hereditary despotism of the established government. But men who can consign over the rights of posterity for ever on the authority of a mouldy parchment, like Mr. Burke, are not qualified to judge of this revolution. It takes in a field too vast for their views to explore, and proceeds with a mightiness of reason they cannot keep pace with.

But there are many points of view in which this revolution may be considered. When despotism has established itself for ages in a country, as in France, it is not in the person of the king only that it resides. It has the appearance of being so in show, and in nominal authority; but it is not so in practice, and in fact. It has its standard everywhere. Every office and department has its despotism, founded upon custom and usage. Every place has its Bastille, and every Bastille its despot. The original hereditary despotism, resident in the person of the king, divides and subdivides itself into a thousand shapes and forms, till at last the whole of it is acted by deputation. This was the case in France; and against this species of despotism, proceeding on through an endless labyrinth of office till the source of it is scarcely perceptible, there is no mode of redress. It strengthens itself by assuming the appearance of duty, and tyrannizes under the pretence of obeying.

When a man reflects on the condition which France was in from the nature of her government, he will see other causes for revolt than those which immediately connect themselves with the person or character of Louis XVI. There were, if I may so express it, a thousand despotisms to be reformed in France, which had grown up under the hereditary despotism of the monarchy, and became so rooted as to be in a great measure independent of it. Between the monarchy, the parliament, and the church, there was a *rivalship* of despotism; besides the feudal despotism operating locally, and the ministerial despotism operating everywhere. But Mr. Burke, by considering the King as the only possible object of a revolt, speaks as if France was a village, in which every thing that passed must be known to its commanding officer, and no oppression could be acted but what he could conveniently control. Mr. Burke might have been in the Bastille his whole life, as well under Louis XVI.

and neither the one nor the other have known that such a man as Mr. Burke existed. The despotic principles of the government were the same in both reigns, though the dispositions of the men were as remote as tyranny and benevolence.

What Mr. Burke considers as a reproach to the French Revolution, (that of bringing it forward under a reign more mild than the preceding ones), is one of its highest honors. The revolutions that have taken place in other European countries, have been excited by personal hatred. The rage was against the man, and he became the victim. But, in the instance of France, we see a revolution generated in the rational contemplation of the rights of man, and distinguishing from the beginning between persons and principles.

But Mr. Burke appears to have no idea of principles, when he is contemplating governments. "Ten years ago," says he, "I could have felicitated France on her having a government, without enquiring what the nature of that government was, or how it was administered." Is this the language of a rational man? Is it the language of a heart feeling as it ought to feel for the rights and happiness of the human race? On this ground, Mr. Burke must compliment every government in the world, while the victims who suffer under them, whether sold into slavery, or tortured out of existence, are wholly forgotten. It is power, and not principles, that Mr. Burke venerates; and under this abominable depravity, he is disqualified to judge between them. Thus much for his opinion as to the occasion of the French Revolution. I now proceed to other considerations.

I know a point in America called Point-no-Point; because as you proceed along the shore, gay and flowery as Mr. Burke's language, it continually recedes and presents itself at a distance before you; but when you have got as far as you can go, there is no point at all. Just

thus it is with Mr. Burke's three hundred and fifty-six pages. It is therefore difficult to reply to him. But as the points he wishes to establish may be inferred from what he abuses, it is in his paradoxes that we must look for his arguments.

As to the tragic paintings by which Mr. Burke has outraged his own imagination, and seeks to work upon that of his readers, they are very well calculated for theatrical representation, where facts are manufactured for the sake of show, and accommodated to produce, through the weakness of sympathy, a weeping effect. But Mr. Burke should recollect that he is writing history, and not *plays;* and that his readers will expect truth, and not the spouting rant of high-toned declamation.

When we see a man dramatically lamenting in a publication intended to be believed, that, "*The age of chivalry is gone!* that *The glory of Europe is extinguished for ever!* that *The unbought grace of life* (if any one knows what it is), *the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise, is gone!*" and all this because the Quixotic age of chivalric nonsense is gone, what opinion can we form of his judgment, or what regard can we pay to his facts? In the rhapsody of his imagination, he has discovered a world of windmills, and his sorrows are, that there are no Quixotes to attack them. But if the age of aristocracy, like that of chivalry, should fall, and they had originally some connection, Mr. Burke, the trumpeter of the order, may continue his parody to the end, and finish with exclaiming, "*Othello's occupation's gone!*"

Notwithstanding Mr. Burke's horrid paintings, when the French Revolution is compared with that of other countries, the astonishment will be, that it is marked with so few sacrifices; but this astonishment will cease when we reflect that *principles*, and not *persons*, were the meditated objects of destruction. The mind of the

nation was acted upon by a higher stimulus than what the consideration of persons could inspire, and sought a higher conquest than could be produced by the downfall of an enemy. Among the few who fell, there do not appear to be any that were intentionally singled out. They all of them had their fate in the circumstances of the moment, and were not pursued with that long, cold-blooded, unabated revenge which pursued the unfortunate Scotch in the affair of 1745.

Through the whole of Mr. Burke's book I do not observe that the Bastille is mentioned more than once, and that with a kind of implication as if he were sorry it was pulled down, and wished it were built up again. "We have rebuilt Newgate," says he, "and tenanted the mansion; and we have prisons almost as strong as the Bastille for those who dare to libel the Queens of France."* As to what a madman, like the person called Lord George Gordon, might say, and to whom Newgate is rather a bedlam than a prison, it is unworthy a rational consideration. It was a madman that libelled, — and that is sufficient apology; and it afforded an opportunity for confining him, which was the thing that was wished for: but certain it is that Mr. Burke, who does not call himself a madman, whatever other people may do, has libelled, in the most unprovoked manner, and in the grossest style of the most vulgar abuse, the whole representative authority of France; and yet Mr. Burke takes his seat in the British House of Commons! From his violence and his grief, his silence on some points, and his excess on others, it is difficult

* Since writing the above, two other places occur in Mr. Burke's pamphlet, in which the name of the Bastille is mentioned, but in the same manner. *In the one*, he introduces it in a sort of obscure question, and asks — "Will any ministers who now serve such a king with but a decent appearance of respect, cordially obey the orders of those whom but the other day, *in his name*, they had committed to the Bastille?" *In the other*, the taking it is mentioned as implying criminality in the French guards who assisted in demolishing it. "They have not (says he) forgot the taking the king's castles at Paris." — This is Mr. Burke, who pretends to write on constitutional freedom.

not to believe that Mr. Burke is sorry, extremely sorry, that arbitrary power, the power of the Pope, and the Bastille, are pulled down.

Not one glance of compassion, not one commiserating reflection, that I can find throughout his book, has he bestowed on those who lingered out the most wretched of lives, a life without hope, in the most miserable of prisons. It is painful to behold a man employing his talents to corrupt himself. Nature has been kinder to Mr. Burke than he is to her. He is not affected by the reality of distress touching his heart, but by the showy resemblance of it striking his imagination. He pities the plumage, but forgets the dying bird. Accustomed to kiss the aristocratical hand that hath purloined him from himself, he degenerates into a composition of art, and the genuine soul of nature forsakes him. His hero or his heroine must be a tragedy-victim expiring in show, and not the real prisoner of misery, sinking into death in the silence of a dungeon.

As Mr. Burke has passed over the whole transaction of the Bastille (and his silence is nothing in his favor), and has entertained his readers with reflections on supposed facts distorted into real falsehoods, I will give, since he has not, some account of the circumstances which preceded that transaction. They will serve to show, that less mischief could scarcely have accompanied such an event, when considered with the treacherous and hostile aggravations of the enemies of the Revolution.

The mind can hardly picture to itself a more tremendous scene than what the city of Paris exhibited at the time of taking the Bastille, and for two days before and after, nor conceive the possibility of its quieting so soon. At a distance, this transaction has appeared only as an act of heroism, standing on itself; and the close political connection it had with the Revolution is lost in the

brilliancy of the achievement. But we are to consider it as the strength of the parties, brought man to man, and contending for the issue. The Bastille was to be either the prize or the prison of the assailants. The downfall of it included the idea of the downfall of despotism ; and this compounded image was become as figuratively united as Bunyan's Doubting Castle and Giant Despair.

The National Assembly, before and at the time of taking the Bastille, was sitting at Versailles, twelve miles distant from Paris. About a week before the rising of the Parisians and their taking the Bastille, it was discovered that a plot was forming, at the head of which was the Count d'Artois, the king's youngest brother, for demolishing the National Assembly, seizing its members, and thereby crushing, by a *coup de main*, all hopes and prospects of forming a free government. For the sake of humanity, as well as of freedom, it is well this plan did not succeed. Examples are not wanting to show how dreadfully vindictive and cruel are all old governments, when they are successful against what they call a revolt.

This plan must have been some time in contemplation ; because, in order to carry it into execution, it was necessary to collect a large military force around Paris, and to cut off the communication between that city and the National Assembly at Versailles. The troops destined for this service were chiefly the foreign troops in the pay of France, and who, for this particular purpose, were drawn from the distant provinces were they were then stationed. When they were collected, to the amount of between twenty-five and thirty thousand, it was judged time to put the plan into execution. The ministry who were then in office, and who were friendly to the Revolution, were instantly dismissed, and a new ministry formed of those who had concerted the project ;

among whom was Count de Broglio, and to his share was given the command of those troops. The character of this man, as described to me in a letter which I communicated to Mr. Burke before he began to write his book, and from an authority which Mr. Burke well knows was good, was that of "an high-flying aristocrat, cool, and capable of every mischief."

While these matters were agitating, the National Assembly stood in the most perilous and critical situation that a body of men can be supposed to act in. They were the devoted victims, and they knew it. They had the hearts and wishes of their country on their side, but military authority they had none. The guards of Broglio surrounded the hall where the Assembly sat, ready, at the word of command, to seize their persons, as had been done the year before to the parliament of Paris. Had the National Assembly deserted their trust, or had they exhibited signs of weakness or fear, their enemies had been encouraged, and the country depressed. When the situation they stood in, the cause they were engaged in, and the crisis then ready to burst which should determine their personal and political fate, and that of their country, and probably of Europe, are taken into one view, none but a heart callous with prejudice, or corrupted by dependence, can avoid interesting itself in their success.

The archbishop of Vienne was at this time president of the National Assembly; a person too old to undergo the scene that a few days, or a few hours, might bring forth. A man of more activity, and bolder fortitude, was necessary; and the National Assembly chose (under the form of a vice-president, for the presidency still resided in the archbishop) M. de la Fayette; and this is the only instance of a vice-president being chosen. It was at the moment that this storm was pending (July 11) that a declaration of rights was brought forward by M.

de la Fayette, and is the same which is alluded to in page seventeen. It was hastily drawn up, and makes only a part of a more extensive declaration of rights, agreed upon and adopted afterwards by the National Assembly. The particular reason for bringing it forward at this moment (M. de la Fayette has since informed me) was, that if the National Assembly should fall in the threatened destruction that then surrounded it, some traces of its principles might have the chance of surviving the wreck.

Every thing now was drawing to a crisis. The event was freedom or slavery. On one side, an army of nearly thirty thousand men; on the other, an unarmed body of citizens, for the citizens of Paris on whom the National Assembly must then immediately depend, were as unarmed and as undisciplined as the citizens of London are now. The French guards had given strong symptoms of their being attached to the national cause; but their numbers were small, not a tenth part of the force that Broglio commanded, and their officers were in the interest of Broglio.

Matters being now ripe for execution, the new ministry made their appearance in office. The reader will carry in his mind, that the Bastille was taken the 14th of July; the point of time I am now speaking to, is the 12th. Immediately on the news of the change of the ministry reaching Paris, in the afternoon, all the playhouses and places of entertainment, shops and houses, were shut up. The change of ministry was considered as the prelude of hostilities, and the opinion was rightly founded.

The foreign troops began to advance towards the city. The Prince de Lambesc, who commanded a body of German cavalry, approached by the Place of Louis XV. which connects itself with some of the streets. In his march he insulted and struck an old man with his sword.

The French are remarkable for their respect to old age, and the insolence, with which it appeared to be done, uniting with the general fermentation they were in, produced a powerful effect, and a cry of *To arms! to arms!* spread itself in a moment over the whole city.

Arms they had none, nor scarcely any who knew the use of them; but desperate resolution, when every hope is at stake, supplies for a while, the want of arms. Near where the Prince of Lambesc was drawn up, were large piles of stones collected for building the new bridge, and with these the people attacked the cavalry. A party of the French guards, upon hearing the firing, rushed from their quarters and joined the people; and night coming on, the cavalry retreated.

The streets of Paris, being narrow, are favorable for defence; and the loftiness of the houses, consisting of many stories, from which great annoyance might be given, secured them against nocturnal enterprises; and the night was spent in providing themselves with every sort of weapon they could make or procure: guns, swords blacksmith's hammers, carpenter's axes, iron crows, pikes, halberds, pitchforks, spits, clubs, &c.

The incredible numbers with which they assembled the next morning, and the still more incredible resolution they exhibited, embarrassed and astonished their enemies. Little did the new ministry expect such a salute. Accustomed to slavery themselves, they had no idea that liberty was capable of such inspiration, or that a body of unarmed citizens would dare to face the military force of thirty thousand men. Every moment of this day was employed in collecting arms, concerting plans, and arranging themselves into the best order which such an instantaneous movement could afford. Broglio continued lying round the city, but made no further advances this day, and the succeeding night passed with as much tranquillity as such a scene could possibly produce.

But defence only was not the object of the citizens. They had a cause at stake, on which depended their freedom or their slavery. They every moment expected an attack, or to hear of one made on the National Assembly; and in such a situation, the most prompt measures are sometimes the best. The object that now presented itself was the Bastille; and the *eclat* of carrying such a fortress in the face of such an army, could not fail to strike a terror into the new ministry, who had scarcely yet had time to meet. By some intercepted correspondence this morning, it was discovered that the Mayor of Paris, M. de Flesselles, who appeared to be in their interest, was betraying them; and from this discovery, there remained no doubt, that Broglio would reinforce the Bastille the ensuing evening. It was therefore necessary to attack it that day; but before this could be done, it was first necessary to procure a better supply of arms than they were then possessed of.

There was, adjoining to the city, a large magazine of arms deposited at the Hospital of the Invalids, which the citizens summoned to surrender; and as the place was not defensible, nor attempted much defence, they soon succeeded. Thus supplied, they marched to attack the Bastille; a vast mixed multitude of all ages, and of all degrees, and armed with all sorts of weapons. Imagination would fail of describing to itself the appearance of such a procession, and of the anxiety for the events which a few hours or a few minutes might produce. What plans the ministry was forming, were as unknown to the people within the city, as what the citizens were doing was unknown to the ministry; and what movements Broglio might make for the support or relief of the place, were to the citizens equally as unknown. All was mystery and hazard.

That the Bastille was attacked with an enthusiasm of heroism, such as only as the highest animation of liberty

could inspire, and carried in the space of a few hours, is an event which the world is fully possessed of. I am not undertaking a detail of the attack, but bringing into view the conspiracy against the nation which provoked it, and which fell with the Bastille. The prison to which the new ministry was dooming the National Assembly, in addition to its being the high altar and castle of despotism, became the proper object to begin with. This enterprise broke up the new ministry, who began now to fly from the ruin they had prepared for others. The troops of Broglio dispersed, and himself fled also.

Mr. Burke has spoken a great deal about plots, but he has never once spoken of this plot against the National Assembly, and the liberties of the nation; and that he might not, he has passed over all the circumstances that might throw it in his way. The exiles who have fled from France, whose cause he so much interests himself in, and from whom he has had his lesson, fled in consequence of a miscarriage of this plot. No plot was formed against them: they were plotting against others; and those who fell, met, not unjustly, the punishment they were preparing to execute. But will Mr. Burke say, that if this plot, contrived with the subtility of an ambuscade, had succeeded, the successful party would have restrained their wrath so soon? Let the history of all old governments answer the question.

Whom has the National Assembly brought to the scaffold? None. They were themselves the devoted victims of this plot, and they have not retaliated; why then are they charged with revenge they have not acted? In the tremendous breaking forth of a whole people, in which all degrees, tempers and characters are confounded, and delivering themselves, by a miracle of exertion, from the destruction meditated against them, is it to be expected that nothing will happen? When men are sore with the sense of oppressions, and menaced with the prospect

of new ones, is the calmness of philosophy, or the palsy of insensibility to be looked for? Mr. Burke exclaims against outrage; yet the greatest is that which he has committed. His book is a volume of outrage, not apologized for by the impulse of a moment, but cherished through a space of ten months; yet Mr. Burke had no provocation, no life, no interest at stake.

More of the citizens fell in this struggle than of their opponents; but four or five persons were seized by the populace, and instantly put to death; the Governor of the Bastille, and the Mayor of Paris, who was detected in the act of betraying them; and afterwards Foulon, one of the new ministry, and Berthier, his son-in-law, who had accepted the office of Intendant of Paris. Their heads were stuck upon spikes, and carried about the city; and it is upon this mode of punishment that Mr. Burke builds a great part of his tragic scenes. Let us therefore examine how men came by the idea of punishing in this manner.

They learn it from the governments they live under; and retaliate the punishments they have been accustomed to behold. The head stuck upon spikes, which remained for years upon Temple-bar, differed nothing in the horror of the scene from those carried about on spikes at Paris: yet this was done by the English government. It may perhaps be said, that it signifies nothing to a man what is done to him after he is dead; but it signifies much to the living. It either tortures their feelings, or hardens their hearts; and in either case, it instructs them how to punish when power falls into their hands.

Lay then the axe to the root, and teach governments humanity. It is their sanguinary punishments which corrupt mankind. In England, the punishment in certain cases, is by *hanging*, *drawing* and *quartering;* the heart of the sufferer is cut out, and held up to the view of the populace. In France, under the former government, the punishments were not less barbarous. Who does not

remember the execution of Damien, torn to pieces by horses? The effect of those cruel spectacles exhibited to the populace, is to destroy tenderness, or excite revenge, and by the base and false idea of governing men by terror, instead of reason, they become precedents. It is over the lowest class of mankind that government by terror is intended to operate, and it is on them that it operates to the worst effect. They have sense enough to feel they are the objects aimed at; and they inflict in their turn the examples of terror they have been instructed to practice.

There is in all European countries, a large class of people of that description which in England is called the "*mob.*" Of this class were those who committed the burnings and devastations in London in 1780, and of this class were those who carried the heads upon spikes in Paris. Foulon and Berthier were taken up in the country and sent to Paris, to undergo their examination at the Hotel de Ville; for the National Assembly, immediately on the new ministry coming into office, passed a decree which they communicated to the king and cabinet, that they (the National Assembly) would hold the ministry, of which Foulon was one, responsible for the measures they were advising and pursuing; but the mob, incensed at the appearance of Foulon and Berthier, tore them from their conductors before they were carried to the Hotel de Ville, and executed them on the spot. Why then does Mr. Burke charge outrages of this kind on a whole people? As well may he charge the riots and outrages of 1780 on all the people of London, or those in Ireland on all his countrymen.

But every thing we see or hear offensive to our feelings and derogatory to the human character, should lead to other reflections than those of reproach. Even the beings who commit them have some claim to our consideration. How then is it that such vast classes of mankind as are

distinguished by the appellation of the vulgar, or the ignorant mob, are so numerous in all old countries? The instant we ask ourselves this question, reflection finds an answer. They arise, as an unavoidable consequence, out of the ill construction of all old governments in Europe, England included with the rest. It is by distortedly exalting some men, that others are distortedly debased, till the whole is out of nature. A vast mass of mankind are degradedly thrown into the background of the human picture, to bring forward, with greater glare, the puppet-show of state and aristocracy. In the commencement of a Revolution, those men are rather the followers of the *camp* than of the *standard* of liberty, and have yet to be instructed how to reverence it.

I give to Mr. Burke all his theatrical exaggerations for facts, and I then ask him, if they do not establish the certainty of what I here lay down? Admitting them to be true, they show the necessity of the French Revolution, as much as any one thing he could have asserted. These outrages are not the effect of the principles of the Revolution, but of the degraded mind that existed before the Revolution, and which the Revolution is calculated to reform. Place them then to their proper cause, and take the reproach of them to your own side.

It is to the honor of the National Assembly, and the city of Paris, that during such a tremendous scene of arms and confusion, beyond the control of all authority, that they have been able, by the influence of example and exhortation, to restrain so much. Never were more pains taken to instruct and enlighten mankind, and to make them see that their interest consisted in their virtue, and not in their revenge, than what have been displayed in the Revolution of France. I now proceed to make some remarks on Mr. Burke's account of the expedition to Versailles, October the 5th and 6th.

I cannot consider Mr. Burke's book in scarcely any

other light than a dramatic performance; and he must, I think, have considered it in the same light himself, by the poetical liberties he has taken of omitting some facts, distorting others, and making the machinery bend to produce a stage effect. Of this kind is his account of the expedition to Versailles. He begins this account by omitting the only facts which, as causes, are known to be true; every thing beyond these is conjecture even in Paris: and he then works up a tale accommodated to his own passions and prejudices.

It is to be observed throughout Mr. Burke's book, that he never speaks of plots *against* the Revolution; and it is from those plots that all the mischiefs have arisen. It suits his purpose to exhibit consequences without their causes. It is one of the arts of the drama to do so. If the crimes of men were exhibited with their sufferings, the stage effect would sometimes be lost, and the audience would be inclined to approve where it was intended they should commiserate.

After all the investigations that have been made into this intricate affair, (the expedition to Versailles,) it still remains enveloped in all that kind of mystery which ever accompanies events produced more from a concurrence of awkward circumstances, than from fixed design. While the characters of men are forming, as is always the case in revolutions, there is a reciprocal suspicion, and a disposition to misinterpret each other; and even parties directly opposite in principle, will sometimes concur in pushing forward the same movement with very different views, and with the hopes of its producing very different consequences. A great deal of this may be discovered in this embarrassed affair, and yet the issue of the whole was what nobody had in view.

The only things certainly known are, that considerable uneasiness was at this time excited in Paris by the delay of the king in not sanctioning and forwarding the de-

crees of the National Assembly, particularly that of the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, and the decrees of the *fourth of August*, which contained the foundation principles on which the constitution was to be erected. The kindest, and perhaps the fairest, conjecture upon this matter is, that some of the ministers intended to make remarks and observations upon certain parts of them, before they were finally sanctioned and sent to the provinces; but be this as it may, the enemies of the Revolution derived hopes from the delay, and the friends of the Revolution, uneasiness.

During this state of suspense, the *Garde du Corps*, which was composed, as such regiments generally are, of persons much connected with the Court, gave an entertainment at Versailles (Oct. 1,) to some foreign regiments then arrived; and when the entertainment was at its height, on a signal given, the *Garde du Corps* tore the national cockade from their hats, trampled it under foot, and replaced it with a counter cockade prepared for the purpose. An indignity of this kind amounted to defiance. It was like declaring war; and if men will give challenges, they must expect consequences. But all this Mr. Burke has carefully kept out of sight. He begins his account by saying, "History will record, that on the 6th of October, 1789, the King and Queen of France, after a day of confusion, alarm, dismay and slaughter, lay down under the pledged security of public faith, to indulge nature in a few hours of respite, and troubled melancholy repose." This is neither the sober style of history, nor the intention of it. It leaves every thing to be guessed at, and mistaken. One would at least think there had been a battle; and a battle there probably would have been, had it not been for the moderating prudence of those whom Mr. Burke involves in his censures. By his keeping the *Garde du Corps* out of sight, Mr. Burke has afforded himself the dramatic license of putting

the King and the Queen in their places, as if the object of the expedition was against them. But to return to my account —

This conduct of the *Garde du Corps*, as might well be expected, alarmed and enraged the Parisians. The colors of the cause, and the cause itself, were become too united to mistake the intention of the insult, and the Parisians were determined to call the *Garde du Corps* to an account. There was certainly nothing of the cowardice of assassination in marching in the face of day to demand satisfaction (if such a phrase may be used) of a body of armed men who had voluntarily given defiance. But the circumstance which serves to throw this affair into embarrassment is, that the enemies of the Revolution appear to have encouraged it, as well as its friends. The one hoped to prevent a civil war by checking it in time, and the other to make one. The hopes of those opposed to the Revolution, rested in making the King of their party, and getting him from Versailles to Metz, where they expected to collect a force, and set up a standard. We have therefore two different objects presenting themselves at the same time, and to be accomplished by the same means: the one, to chastise the *Garde du Corps*, which was the object of the Parisians; the other, to render the confusion of such a scene an inducement to the King to set off for Metz.

On October the 5th, a very numerous body of women, and men in the disguise of women, collected round the Hotel de Ville or town-hall at Paris, and set off for Versailles. Their professed object was the *Garde du Corps;* but prudent men readily recollected that mischief is more easily begun than ended; and this impressed itself with the more force, from the suspicions already stated, and the irregularity of such a cavalcade. As soon therefore as a sufficient force could be collected, M. de la Fayette, by orders from the civil authority of Paris,

set off after them at the head of twenty thousand of the Paris militia. The Revolution could derive no benefit from confusion, and its opposers might. By an amiable and spirited manner of address, he had hitherto been fortunate in calming disquietudes, and in this he was extraordinarily successful; to frustrate, therefore, the hopes of those who might seek to improve this scene into a sort of justifiable necessity for the King's quitting Versailles and withdrawing to Metz, and to prevent at the same time, the consequences that might ensue between the *Garde du Corps* and this phalanx of men and women, he forwarded expresses to the King, that he was on his march to Versailles, at the orders of the civil authority of Paris, for the purpose of peace and protection, expressing at the same time, the necessity of restraining the *Garde du Corps* from firing on the people.*

He arrived at Versailles between ten and eleven at night. The *Garde du Corps* was drawn up, and the people had arrived some time before, but every thing had remained suspended. Wisdom and policy now consisted in changing a scene of danger into a happy event. M. de la Fayette became the mediator between the enraged parties; and the King, to remove the uneasiness which had arisen from the delay already stated, sent for the President of the National Assembly, and signed the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, and such other parts of the constitution as were in readiness.

It was now about one in the morning. Every thing appeared to be composed, and a general congratulation took place. At the beat of drum a proclamation was made, that the citizens of Versailles would give the hospitality of their houses to their fellow-citizens of Paris. Those who could not be accommodated in this manner, remained in the streets, or took up their quarters in the churches; and at two o'clock the King and Queen retired.

*I am warranted in asserting this, as I had it personally from M. de la Fayette, with whom I have lived in habits of friendship for fourteen years.

In this state matters passed till the break of day, when a fresh disturbance arose from the censurable conduct of some of both parties, for such characters there will be in all such scenes. One of the *Garde du Corps* appeared at one of the windows of the palace, and the people who had remained during the night in the streets accosted him with reviling and provocative language. Instead of retiring, as in such a case prudence would have dictated, he presented his musket, fired, and killed one of the Paris militia. The peace being thus broken, the people rushed into the palace in quest of the offender. They attacked the quarters of the *Garde du Corps* within the palace, and pursued them through the avenues of it, and to the apartments of the King. On this tumult, not the Queen only, as Mr. Burke has represented it, but every person in the palace, was awakened and alarmed; and M. de la Fayette had a second time to interpose between the parties, the event of which was, that the *Garde du Corps* put on the national cockade, and the matter ended, as by oblivion, after the loss of two or three lives.

During the latter part of the time in which this confusion was acting, the King and Queen were in public at the balcony, and neither of them concealed for safety's sake, as Mr. Burke insinuates. Matters being thus appeased, and tranquillity restored, a general acclamation broke forth, of *Le Roi à Paris—Le Roi à Paris*—The King to Paris. It was the shout of peace, and immediately accepted on the part of the King. By this measure, all future projects of trepanning the King to Metz, and setting up the standard of opposition to the constitution, were prevented, and the suspicions extinguished. The King and his family reached Paris in the evening, and were congratulated on their arrival by M. Bailley, the Mayor of Paris, in the name of the citizens. Mr. Burke, who throughout his book confounds things, persons, and principles, has in his remarks on M. Bailley's address, con-

founded time also. He censures M. Bailley for calling it, "*un bon jour*," a good day. Mr. Burke should have informed himself, that this scene took up the space of two days, the day on which it began with every appearance of danger and mischief, and the day on which it terminated without the mischiefs that threatened; and that it is to this peaceful termination that M. Bailley alludes, and to the arrival of the King at Paris. Not less than three hundred thousand persons arranged themselves in the procession from Versailles to Paris, and not an act of molestation was committed during the whole march.

Mr. Burke, on the authority of M. Lally Tollendal, a deserter from the National Assembly, says, that on entering Paris, the people shouted, "*Tous les évêques á la laterne.*" All Bishops to be hanged at the lantern or lamp-posts. It is surprising that nobody could hear this but Lally Tollendal, and that nobody should believe it but Mr. Burke. It has not the least connection with any part of the transaction, and is totally foreign to every circumstance of it. The bishops have never been introduced before into any scene of Mr. Burke's drama: Why then are they, all at once, and altogether, *tout à coup et tous ensemble*, introduced now? Mr. Burke brings forward his bishops and his lantern, like figures in a magic lantern, and raises his scenes by contrast instead of connection. But it serves to show, with the rest of his book, what little credit ought to be given, where even probability is set at defiance, for the purpose of defaming: and with this reflection, instead of a soliloquy in praise of chivalry, as Mr. Burke has done, I close the account of the expedition to Versailles.*

I have now to follow Mr. Burke through a pathless wilderness of rhapsodies, and a sort of descant upon governments, in which he asserts whatever he pleases, on

* An account of the expedition to Versailles may be seen in No. 13, of the *Revolution de Paris*, containing the events from the 3d to the 10th of October, 1789.

the presumption of its being believed, without offering either evidence or reasons for so doing.

Before any thing can be reasoned upon to a conclusion, certain facts, principles, or data, to reason from, must be established, admitted, or denied. Mr. Burke, with his usual outrage, abuses the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, published by the National Assembly of France, as the basis on which the constitution of France is built. This he calls "paltry and blurred sheets of paper about the rights of man."—Does Mr. Burke mean to deny that *man* has any rights? If he does, then he must mean that there are no such things as rights any where, and that he has none himself; for who is there in the world but man? But if Mr. Burke means to admit that man has rights, the question then will be, what are those rights, and how came man by them originally?

The error of those who reason by precedents drawn from antiquity, respecting the rights of man, is that they do not go far enough into antiquity. They do not go the whole way. They stop in some of the intermediate stages of an hundred or a thousand years, and produce what was then done as a rule for the present day. This is no authority at all. If we travel still further into antiquity, we shall find a directly contrary opinion and practice prevailing; and, if antiquity is to be authority, a thousand such authorities may be produced, successively contradicting each other: but if we proceed on, we shall at last come out right; we shall come to the time when man came from the hand of his Maker. What was he then? Man. Man was his high and only title, and a higher cannot be given him. But of titles I shall speak hereafter.

We have now arrived at the origin of man, and at the origin of his rights. As to the manner in which the world has been governed from that day to this, it is no further any concern of ours than to make a proper use of the errors or the improvements which the history of it

presents. Those who lived a hundred or a thousand years ago, were then moderns as we are now. They had *their* ancients, and those ancients had others, and we also shall be ancients in our turn. If the mere name of antiquity is to govern in the affairs of life, the people who are to live an hundred or a thousand years hence, may as well take us for a precedent, as we make a precedent of those who lived an hundred or a thousand years ago. The fact is, that portions of antiquity, by proving every thing, establish nothing. It is authority against authority all the way, till we come to the divine origin of the rights of man, at the creation. Here our inquiries find a resting-place, and our reason finds a home. If a dispute about the rights of man had arisen at a distance of an hundred years from the creation, it is to this source of authority they must have referred, and it is to the same source of authority that we must now refer.

Though I mean not to touch upon any sectarian principle of religion, yet it may be worth observing, that the genealogy of Christ is traced to Adam. Why then not trace the rights of man to the creation of man? I will answer the question. Because there have been upstart governments, thrusting themselves between, and presumptuously working to *un-make* man.

If any generation of men ever possessed the right of dictating the mode by which the world should be governed for ever, it was the first generation that existed; and if that generation did it not, no succeeding generation can show any authority for doing it, nor can set any up. The illuminating and divine principle of the equal rights of man, (for it has its origin from the Maker of man), relates not only to the living individuals, but to generations of men succeeding each other. Every generation is equal in rights to the generations which preceded it, by the same rule that every individual is born equal in rights with his contemporary.

Every history of the creation, and every traditionary account, whether from the lettered or unlettered world, however they may vary in their opinion or belief of certain particulars, all agree in establishing one point, *the unity of man;* by which I mean that men are all of *one degree*, and consequently that all men are born equal, and with equal natural rights, in the same manner as if posterity had been continued by *creation* instead of *generation*, the latter being only the mode by which the former is carried forward; and consequently, every child born into the world must be considered as deriving its existence from God. The world is as new to him as it was to the first man that existed, and his natural right in it is of the same kind.

The Mosaic account of the creation, whether taken as divine authority or merely historical, is full to this point, *the unity or equality of man.* The expressions admit of no controversy. "And God said, let us make man in our own image. In the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." The distinction of sexes is pointed out, but no other distinction is even implied. If this be not divine authority, it is at least historical authority, and shows that the equality of man, so far from being a modern doctrine, is the oldest upon record.

It is also to be observed, that all the religions known in the world are founded, so far as they relate to man, on the *unity of man*, as being all of one degree. Whether in heaven or in hell, or in whatever state man may be supposed to exist hereafter, the good and the bad are the only distinctions. Nay, even the laws of governments are obliged to slide into this principle, by making degrees to consist in crimes, and not in persons.

It is one of the greatest of all truths, and of the highest advantage to cultivate. By considering man in this light, and by instructing him to consider himself in this light, it places him in a close connection with all his

duties, whether to his Creator or to the creation, of which he is a part; and it is only when he forgets his origin, or, to use a more fashionable phrase, his *birth and family*, that he becomes dissolute. It is not among the least of the evils of the present existing governments in all parts of Europe, that man, considered as man, is thrown back to a vast distance from his Maker, and the artificial chasm filled up by a succession of barriers, or a sort of turnpike gates, through which he has to pass. I will quote Mr. Burke's catalogue of barriers that he has set up between man and his Maker. Putting himself in the character of a herald, he says—"We fear God—we look with *awe* to kings—with affection to parliaments—with duty to magistrates—with reverence to priests, and with respect to nobility." Mr. Burke has forgotten to put in "*chivalry*." He has also forgotten to put in Peter.

The duty of man is not a wilderness of turnpike gates, through which he is to pass by tickets from one to the other. It is plain and simple, and consists but of two points. His duty to God, which every man must feel; and with respect to his neighbor, to do as he would be done by. If those to whom power is delegated do well, they will be respected; if not, they will be despised; and with regard to those to whom no power is delegated, but who assume it, the rational world can know nothing of them.

Hitherto we have spoken only (and that but in part) of the natural rights of man. We have now to consider the civil rights of man, and to show how the one originates from the other. Man did not enter into society to become *worse* than he was before, nor to have fewer rights than he had before, but to have those rights better secured. His natural rights are the foundation of all his civil rights. But in order to pursue this distinction with more precision, it is necessary to mark the different qualities of natural and civil rights.

A few words will explain this. Natural rights are those which appertain to man in right of his existence. Of this kind are all the intellectual rights, or rights of the mind, and also all those rights of acting as an individual for his own comfort and happiness, which are not injurious to the natural rights of others.—Civil rights are those which appertain to man in right of his being a member of society. Every civil right has for its foundation some natural right pre-existing in the individual, but to the enjoyment of which his individual power is not, in all cases, sufficiently competent. Of this kind are all those which relate to security and protection.

From this short review, it will be easy to distinguish between that class of natural rights which man retains after entering into society, and those which he throws into the common stock as a member of society.

The natural rights which he retains, are all those in which the *power* to execute is as perfect in the individual as the right itself. Among this class, as is before mentioned, are all the intellectual rights, or rights of the mind: consequently, religion is one of those rights. The natural rights which are not retained, are all those in which, though the right is perfect in the individual, the power to execute them is defective. They answer not his purpose. A man, by natural right, has a right to judge in his own cause; and so far as the right of the mind is concerned, he never surrenders it: but what availeth it him to judge, if he has not power to redress? He therefore deposits his right in the common stock of society, and takes the arm of society, of which he is a part, in preference and in addition to his own. Society *grants* him nothing. Every man is proprietor in society, and draws on the capital as a matter of right.

From these premises, two or three certain conclusions will follow.

First, That every civil right grows out of a natural right; or, in other words, is a natural right exchanged.

Secondly, That civil power, properly considered as such, is made up of the aggregate of that class of the natural rights of man, which becomes defective in the individual in point of power, and answers not his purpose, but when collected to a focus, becomes competent to the purpose of every one.

Thirdly, That the power produced from the aggregate of natural rights, imperfect in power in the individual, cannot be applied to invade the natural rights which are retained in the individual, and in which the power to execute is as perfect as the right itself.

We have now, in a few words, traced man from a natural individual to a member of society, and shown, or endeavored to show, the quality of the natural rights retained, and those which are exchanged for civil rights. Let us now apply those principles to governments.

In casting our eyes over the world, it is extremely easy to distinguish the governments which have arisen out of society, or out of the social compact, from those which have not: but to place this in a clearer light than what a single glance may afford, it will be proper to take a review of the several sources from which the governments have arisen, and on which they have been founded.

They may be all comprehended under three heads. First, Superstition. Secondly, Power. Thirdly, The common interests of society, and the common rights of man.

The first was a government of priestcraft, the second of conquerors, and the third of reason.

When a set of artful men pretended, through the medium of oracles, to hold intercourse with the Deity, as familiarly as they now march up the back-stairs in European courts, the world was completely under the government of superstition. The oracles were consulted, and

whatever they were made to say, became the law; and this sort of government lasted as long as this sort of superstition lasted.

After these a race of conquerors arose, whose government, like that of William the Conqueror, was founded in power, and the sword assumed the name of a sceptre. Governments thus established, last as long as the power to support them lasts; but that they might avail themselves of every engine in their favor, they united fraud to force, and set up an idol which they called *Divine Right*, and which, in imitation of the Pope, who affects to be spiritual and temporal, and in contradiction to the Founder of the Christian religion, twisted itself afterwards into an idol of another shape, called *Church and State*. The key of St. Peter, and the key of the Treasury, became quartered on one another, and the wondering cheated multitude worshipped the invention.

When I contemplate the natural dignity of man; when I feel (for Nature has not been kind enough to me to blunt my feelings) for the honor and happiness of its character, I become irritated at the attempt to govern mankind by force and fraud, as if they were all knaves and fools, and can scarcely avoid disgust at those who are thus imposed upon.

We have now to review the governments which arise out of society, in contradistinction to those which arose out of superstition and conquest.

It has been thought a considerable advance towards establishing the principles of Freedom, to say, that government is a compact between those who govern and those who are governed: but this cannot be true, because it is putting the effect before the cause; for as man must have existed before governments existed, there necessarily was a time when governments did not exist, and consequently there could originally exist no governors to form such a compact with. The fact therefore must be, that

the *individuals themselves*, each in his own personal and sovereign right, *entered into a compact with each other* to produce a government: and this is the only mode in which governments have a right to arise, and the only principle on which they have a right to exist.

To possess ourselves of a clear idea of what government is, or ought to be, we must trace it to its origin. In doing this, we shall easily discover that governments must have arisen, either *out* of the people, or *over* the people. Mr. Burke has made no distinction. He investigates nothing to its source, and therefore he confounds every thing; but he has signified his intention of undertaking at some future opportunity, a comparison between the constitutions of England and France. As he thus renders it a subject of controversy by throwing the gauntlet, I take him upon his own ground. It is in high challenges that high truths have the right of appearing; and I accept it with the more readiness, because it affords me, at the same time, an opportunity of pursuing the subject with respect to governments arising out of society.

But it will be first necessary to define what is meant by a *constitution*. It is not sufficient that we adopt the word; we must fix also a standard signification to it.

A constitution is not a thing in name only, but in fact. It has not an ideal, but a real existence; and wherever it cannot be produced in a visible form, there is none. A constitution is a thing *antecedent* to a government, and a government is only the creature of a constitution. The constitution of a country is not the act of its government, but of the people constituting a government. It is the body of elements, to which you can refer, and quote article by article; and which contains the principles on which the government shall be established, the manner in which it shall be organized, the powers it shall have, the mode of elections, the duration of parlia-

ments, or by what other name such bodies may be called; the powers which the executive part of the government shall have; and, in fine, every thing that relates to the complete organization of a civil government, and the principles on which it shall act, and by which it shall be bound. A constitution, therefore, is to a government, what the laws made afterwards by that government are to a court of judicature. The court of judicature does not make the laws, neither can it alter them; it only acts in conformity to the laws made: and the government is in like manner governed by the constitution.

Can then Mr. Burke produce the English Constitution? If he cannot, we may fairly conclude, that though it has been so much talked about, no such thing as a constitution exists, or ever did exist, and consequently that the people have yet a constitution to form.

Mr. Burke will not, I presume, deny the position I have already advanced; namely, that governments arise, either *out* of the people, or *over* the people. The English government is one of those which arose out of a conquest, and not out of society, and consequently it arose over the people; and though it has been much modified from the opportunity of circumstances since the time of William the Conqueror, the country has never yet regenerated itself, and is therefore without a constitution.

I readily perceive the reason why Mr. Burke declined going into the comparison between the English and French constitutions, because he could not but perceive, when he sat down to the task, that no such thing as a constitution existed on his side the question. His book is certainly bulky enough to have contained all he could say on this subject, and it would have been the best manner in which people could have judged of their separate merits. Why then has he declined the only thing that was worth while to write upon? It was the strongest ground he could take, if the advantages were

on his side; but the weakest, if they were not: and his declining to take it, is either a sign that he could not possess it, or could not maintain it.

Mr. Burke said in a speech last winter in parliament, That when the National Assembly first met in three Orders, (the Tiers Etats, the Clergy, and the Noblesse,) France had then a good constitution. This shows, among numerous other instances, that Mr. Burke does not understand what a constitution is. The persons so met, were not a *constitution*, but a *convention*, to make a constitution.

The present National Assembly of France is, strictly speaking, the personal social compact. The members of it are the delegates of the nation in its *original* character; future assemblies will be the delegates of the nation in its *organized* character. The authority of the present Assembly is different to what the authority of future Assemblies will be. The authority of the present one is to form a constitution; the authority of future Assemblies will be to legislate according to the principles and forms prescribed in that constitution; and if experience should hereafter show that alterations, amendments, or additions are necessary, the constitution will point out the mode by which such things shall be done, and not leave it to the discretionary power of the future government.

A government on the principles on which constitutional governments, arising out of society, are established, cannot have the right of altering itself. If it had, it would be arbitrary. It might make itself what it pleased; and wherever such a right is set up, it shows that there is no constitution. The act by which the English parliament empowered itself to sit for seven years, shows there is no constitution in England. It might, by the same self authority, have set any greater number of years or for life. The bill which the present Mr. Pitt

brought into parliament some years ago, to reform parliament, was on the same erroneous principle.

The right of reform is in the nation in its original character, and the constitutional method would be by a general convention elected for the purpose. There is moreover a paradox in the idea of vitiated bodies reforming themselves.

From these preliminaries I proceed to draw some comparisons. I have already spoken of the declaration of rights; and as I mean to be as concise as possible, I shall proceed to other parts of the French constitution.

The constitution of France says, that every man who pays a tax of sixty sous per annum (*2s.* and *6d.* English) is an elector. What article will Mr. Burke place against this? Can any thing be more limited, and at the same time more capricious, than what the qualifications are in England? Limited — because not one man in a hundred (I speak much within compass) is admitted to vote: capricious — because the lowest character that can be supposed to exist, and who has not so much as the visible means of an honest livelihood, is an elector in some places; while, in other places, the man who pays very large taxes, and with a known fair character, and the farmer who rents to the amount of three or four hundred pounds a year, and with a property on that farm to three or four times that amount, is not admitted to be an elector. Every thing is out of nature, as Mr. Burke says on another occasion, in this strange chaos, and all sorts of follies are blended with all sorts of crimes. William the Conqueror, and his descendants, parcelled out the country in this manner, and bribed one part of it by what they called Charters, to hold the other parts of it the better subjected to their will. This is the reason why so many of those charters abound in Cornwall. The people were averse to the government established at the conquest, and the towns were garrisoned and bribed to enslave the

country. All the old charters are the badges of this conquest, and it is from this source that the capriciousness of election arises.

The French constitution says, that the number of representatives for any place shall be in a ratio to the number of taxable inhabitants or electors. What article will Mr. Burke place against this? The county of Yorkshire, which contains near a million of souls, sends two county members; and so does the county of Rutland, which contains not a hundredth part of that number. The town of old Sarum, which contains not three houses, sends two members; and the town of Manchester, which contains upwards of sixty thousand souls, is not admitted to send any. Is there any principle in these things? Is there any thing by which you can trace the marks of freedom or discover those of wisdom? No wonder, then, Mr. Burke has declined the comparison, and endeavored to lead his readers from the point by a wild unsystematical display of paradoxical rhapsodies.

The French constitution says, that the National Assembly shall be elected every two years. What article will Mr. Burke place against this? Why, that the nation has no right at all in the case: that the government is perfectly arbitrary with respect to this point; and he can quote for his authority the precedent of a former Parliament.

The French constitution says, there shall be no game laws; that the farmer on whose lands wild game shall be found (for it is by the produce of those lands they are fed) shall have a right to what he can take. That there shall be no monopolies of any kind, that all trades shall be free, and every man free to follow any occupation by which he can procure an honest livelihood, and in any place, town, or city, throughout the nation. What will Mr. Burke say to this? In England game is made the property of those at whose expense it is not fed; and

with respect to monopolies, the country is cut up into monopolies. Every chartered town is an aristocratic monopoly in itself, and the qualification of electors proceeds out of those chartered monopolies. Is this freedom? Is this what Mr. Burke means by a constitution?

In these chartered monopolies, a man coming from another part of the country is hunted from them as if he were a foreign enemy. An Englishman is not free in his own country: Every one of those places presents a barrier in his way, and tells him he is not a freeman — that he has no rights. Within these monopolies are other monopolies. In a city, such for instance as Bath, which contains between twenty and thirty thousand inhabitants, the right of electing representatives to parliament is monopolized by about thirty-one persons. And within these monopolies are still others. A man, even of the same town, whose parents were not in circumstances to give him an occupation, is debarred, in many cases, from the natural right of acquiring one, be his genius or industry what it may.

Are these things examples to hold out to a country regenerating itself from slavery, like France? Certainly they are not; and certain am I, that when the people of England come to reflect upon them, they will, like France, annihilate those badges of ancient oppression, those traces of a conquered nation. Had Mr. Burke possessed talents similar to the author *On the Wealth of Nations*, he would have comprehended all the parts which enter into, and, by assemblage, form a constitution. He would have reasoned from minutiæ to magnitude. It is not from his prejudices only, but from the disorderly cast of his genius, that he is unfitted for the subject he writes upon. Even his genius is without a constitution. It is a genius at random, and not a genius constituted. But he must say something. — He has there-

fore mounted in the air like a balloon, to draw the eyes of the multitude from the ground they stand upon.

Much is to be learned from the French constitution. Conquest and tyranny transplanted themselves with William the Conqueror from Normandy into England, and the country is yet disfigured with the marks. May then the example of all France contribute to regenerate the freedom which a province of it destroyed!

The French constitution says, That to preserve the national representation from being corrupt, no member of the National Assembly shall be an officer of the government, a place-man, or a pensioner.—What will Mr. Burke place against this? I will whisper his answer: *Loaves* and *Fishes*. Ah! this government of loaves and fishes has more mischief in it than people have yet reflected on. The National Assembly has made the discovery, and it holds out the example to the world. Had governments agreed to quarrel on purpose to fleece their countries by taxes, they could not have succeeded better than they have done.

Many things in the English government appears to me the reverse of what they ought to be, and of what they are said to be. The parliament, imperfectly and capriciously elected as it is, is nevertheless *supposed* to hold the national purse in *trust* for the nation: but in the manner in which an English parliament is constructed, it is like a man being both mortgager and mortgagee; and in the case of misapplication of trust, it is the criminal sitting in judgment upon himself. If those who vote the supplies are the same persons who receive the supplies when voted, and are to account for the expenditure of those supplies to those who voted them, it is *themselves accountable to themselves*, and the *Comedy of Errors* concludes with the Pantomime of *Hush*. Neither the ministerial party, nor the opposition, will touch upon this case. The national purse is the common hack which

each mounts upon. It is like what the country people call, "Ride and tie—You ride a little way, and then I."* —They order these things better in France.

The French constitution says, that the right of war and peace is in the nation. Where else should it reside but in those who are to pay the expense?

In England, this right is said to reside in a *metaphor*, shown at the Tower for six-pence or a shilling a-piece: So are the lions; and it would be a step nearer to reason to say it resided in them, for any inanimate metaphor is no more than a hat or a cap. We can all see the absurdity of worshipping Aaron's molten calf, or Nebuchadnezzar's golden image; but why do men continue to practise on themselves the absurdities they despise in others?

It may with reason be said, that in the manner the English nation is represented, it signifies not where this right resides, whether in the Crown or in the Parliament. War is the common harvest of all those who participate in the division and expenditure of public money, in all countries. It is the art of *conquering at home:* the object of it is an increase of revenue; and as revenue cannot be increased without taxes, a pretence must be made for expenditures. In reviewing the history of the English Government, its wars and its taxes, a bystander, not blinded by prejudice, nor warped by interest, would declare, that taxes were not raised to carry on wars, but that wars were raised to carry on taxes.

Mr. Burke, as a Member of the House of Commons, is a part of the English Government; and though he professes himself an enemy to war, he abuses the French Constitution, which seeks to explode it. He holds up

* It is a practice in some parts of the country, when two travellers have but one horse, which like the national purse will not carry double, that the one mounts and rides two or three miles a-head, and then ties the horse to a gate, and walks on. When the second traveller arrives, he takes the horse, rides on, and passes his companion a mile or two, and ties again; and so on—*Ride and tie.*

the English Government as a model in all its parts, to France; but he should first know the remarks which the French make upon it. They contend, in favor of their own, that the portion of liberty enjoyed in England, is just enough to enslave a country by, more productively than by despotism; and that as the real object of all despotism is revenue, a Government so formed obtains more than it could do either by direct despotism, or in a full state of freedom, and is therefore, on the ground of interest, opposed to both. They account also for the readiness which always appears in such governments for engaging in wars, by remarking on the different motives which produce them. In despotic governments, wars are the effect of pride; but in those governments in which they become the means of taxation, they acquire thereby a more permanent promptitude.

The French Constitution, therefore, to provide against both these evils, has taken away the power of declaring war from kings and ministers, and placed the right where the expense must fall.

When the question on the right of war and peace was agitating in the National Assembly, the people of England appeared to be much interested in the event, and highly to applaud the decision.—As a principle, it applies as much to one country as to another. William the Conqueror, *as a conqueror*, held this power of war and peace in himself, and his descendants have ever since claimed it under him as a right.

Although Mr. Burke has asserted the right of the parliament at the Revolution to bind and control the nation and posterity for *ever*, he denies, at the same time, that the parliament or the nation had any right to alter what he calls the succession of the crown, in any thing but in part, or by a sort of modification. By his taking this ground, he throws the case back to the *Norman Conquest;* and by thus running a line of succession

springing from William the Conqueror to the present day, he makes it necessary to enquire who and what William the Conqueror was, and where he came from; and into the origin, history, and nature of what are called prerogatives. Every thing must have had a beginning, and the fog of time and antiquity should be penetrated to discover it. Let then Mr. Burke bring forward his William of Normandy, for it is to this origin that his argument goes. It also unfortunately happens, in running this line of succession, that another line, parallel thereto, presents itself, which is, that if the succession runs in the line of the Conquest, the nation runs in the line of being conquered, and it ought to rescue itself from this reproach.

But it will perhaps be said, that though the power of declaring war descends in the heritage of the Conquest, it is held in check by the right of the parliament to withhold the supplies. It will always happen, when a thing is originally wrong, that amendments do not make it right; and it often happens, that they do as much mischief one way as good the other: and such is the case here; for if the one rashly declares war as a matter of right, and the other peremptorily withholds the supplies as a matter of right, the remedy becomes as bad, or worse than the disease. The one forces the nation to a combat, and the other ties its hands: But the more probable issue is, that the contest will end in a collusion between the parties, and be made a screen to both.

On this question of war, three things are to be considered. First, the right of declaring it: Secondly, the expense of supporting it: Thirdly, the mode of conducting it after it is declared. The French constitution places the *right* where the *expense* must fall, and this union can be only in the nation. The mode of conducting it after it is declared, it consigns to the executive

department. Were this the case in all countries, we should hear but little more of wars.

Before I proceed to consider other parts of the French constitution, and by way of relieving the fatigue of argument, I will introduce an anecdote which I had from Dr. Franklin.

While the doctor resided in France, as minister from America, during the war, he had numerous proposals made to him by projectors of every country and of every kind, who wished to go to the land that floweth with milk and honey, America; and among the rest, there was one who offered himself to be King. He introduced his proposal to the doctor by letter, which is now in the hands of M. Beaumarchais, of Paris—stating, first, that as the Americans had dismissed or sent away* their King, they would want another. Secondly, that himself was a Norman. Thirdly, that he was of a more ancient family than the Dukes of Normandy, and of a more honorable descent, his line having never been bastardized. Fourthly, that there was already a precedent in England, of Kings coming out of Normandy; and on these grounds he rested his offer, *enjoining* that the doctor would forward it to America. But as the doctor did neither this, nor yet sent him an answer, the projector wrote a second letter; in which he did not, it is true, threaten to go over and conquer America, but only, with great dignity, proposed, that if his offer was not accepted, an acknowledgment of about £30,000 might be made to him for his generosity! Now, as all arguments respecting succession must necessarily connect that succession with some beginning, Mr. Burke's arguments on this subject go to show that there is no English origin of kings, and that they are descendants of the Norman line in right of the Conquest. It may, therefore, be of service to his doctrine to make this story known, and to inform him that in

* The word he used was *renvoyé*, dismissed or sent away.

case of that natural extinction to which all mortality is subject, kings may again be had from Normandy, on more reasonable terms than William the Conqueror; and, consequently, that the good people of England, at the Revolution of 1688, might have done much better, had such a generous Norman as *this* known *their* wants, and they *his*. The chivalric character which Mr. Burke so much admires, is certainly much easier to make a bargain with than a hard-dealing Dutchman. But to return to the matters of the constitution.—

The French constitution says, *there shall be no titles;* and of consequence, all that class of equivocal generation, which in some countries is called "*Aristocracy*," and in others "*Nobility*," is done away, and the *peer* is exalted into *man*.

Titles are but nicknames, and every nickname is a title. The thing is perfectly harmless in itself, but it marks a sort of foppery in the human character which degrades it. It renders man diminutive in things which are great, and the counterfeit of woman in things which are little. It talks about its fine blue *ribbon* like a girl, and shows its new *garter* like a child. A certain writer, of some antiquity, says, "When I was a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

It is, properly, from the elevated mind of France, that the folly of titles has been abolished. It has outgrown the babyclothes of *Count* and *Duke*, and breeched itself in manhood. France has not levelled, it has exalted. It has put down the dwarf to set up the man. The insignificance of a senseless word like *Duke*, *Count*, or *Earl*, has ceased to please. Even those who possessed them, have disowned the gibberish, and, as they outgrew the rickets, have despised the rattle. The genuine mind of man, thirsting for its native home, society, contemns the gewgaws that separate him from it. Titles are like cir-

cles drawn by the magician's wand, to contract the sphere of man's felicity. He lives immured within the Bastille of a word, and surveys at a distance the envied life of man.

Is it then any wonder that titles should fall in France? Is it not a greater wonder they should be kept up anywhere? What are they? What is their worth, and "what is their amount?" When we think or speak of a *Judge*, or a *General*, we associate with it the ideas of office and character; we think of gravity in the one, and bravery in the other; but when we use a word merely as a title, no ideas associate with it. Through all the vocabulary of Adam, there is not such an animal as a Duke or a Count; neither can we connect any idea to the words. Whether they mean strength or weakness, wisdom or folly, a child or a man, or a rider or a horse, is all equivocal. What respect then can be paid to that which describes nothing, and which means nothing? Imagination has given figure and character to centaurs, satyrs, and down to all the fairy tribe; but titles baffle even the powers of fancy, and are a chimerical nondescript.

But this is not all. If a whole country is disposed to hold them in contempt, all their value is gone, and none will own them. It is common opinion only that makes them any thing or nothing, or worse than nothing. There is no occasion to take titles away, for they take themselves away when society concurs to ridicule them. This species of imaginary consequence has visibly declined in every part of Europe, and it hastens to its exit as the world of reason continues to rise. There was a time when the lowest class of what are called nobility, was more thought of than the highest is now, and when a man in armor riding through Christendom in search of adventures was more stared at than a modern duke. The world has seen this folly fall, and it has fallen by being laughed at, and the farce of titles will follow its

fate. The patriots of France have discovered in good time, that rank and dignity in society must take a new ground. The old one has fallen through. It must now take the substantial ground of character, instead of the chimerical ground of titles ; and they have brought their titles to the altar, and made of them a burnt-offering to Reason.

If no mischief had annexed itself to the folly of titles, they would not have been worth a serious and formal destruction, such as the National Assembly have decreed them : and this makes it necessary to inquire further into the nature and character of aristocracy.

That, then, which is called aristocracy in some countries, and nobility in others, arose out of the governments founded upon conquest. It was originally a military order, for the purpose of supporting military government ; (for such were all governments founded in conquest), and to keep up a succession of this order for the purpose for which it was established, all the younger branches of those families were disinherited, and the law of *primogenitureship* set up.

The nature and character of aristocracy shows itself to us in this law. It is a law against every law of nature, and Nature herself calls for its destruction. Establish family justice, and aristocracy falls. By the aristocratical law of primogenitureship, in a family of six children, five are exposed. Aristocracy has never more than *one* child. The rest are begotten to be devoured. They are thrown to the cannibal for prey, and the natural parent prepares the unnatural repast.

As every thing which is out of nature in man, affects, more or less, the interest of society, so does this. All the children which the aristocracy disowns (which are all, except the eldest) are, in general, cast like orphans on a parish, to be provided for by the public, but at a greater charge. Unnecessary offices and places in govern-

ments and courts are created at the expense of the public, to maintain them.

With what kind of parental reflections can the father or mother contemplate their younger offspring. By nature they are children, and by marriage they are heirs; but by aristocracy they are bastards and orphans. They are the flesh and blood of their parents in one line, and nothing akin to them in the other. To restore, therefore, parents to their children, and children to their parents—relations to each other, and man to society—and to exterminate the monster Aristocracy, root and branch—the French constitution has destroyed the law of *Primogenitureship*. Here then lies the monster; and Mr. Burke, if he pleases, may write its epitaph.

Hitherto we have considered aristocracy chiefly in one point of view. We have now to consider it in another. But whether we view it before or behind, or sideways, or any way else, domestically or publicly, it is still a monster.

In France, aristocracy had one feature less in its countenance, than what it has in some other countries. It did not compose a body of hereditary legislators. It was not "*a corporation of aristocracy*," for such I have heard M. de la Fayette describe an English House of Peers. Let us then examine the grounds upon which the French constitution has resolved against having such a House in France.

Because, in the first place, as is already mentioned, aristocracy is kept up by family tyranny and injustice.

Secondly, Because there is an unnatural unfitness in an aristocracy to be legislators for a nation. Their ideas of *distributive justice* are corrupted at the very source. They begin life by trampling on all their younger brothers and sisters, and relations of every kind, and are taught and educated so to do. With what ideas of justice or honor can that man enter a house of legislation.

who absorbs in his own person the inheritance of a whole family of children, or doles out to them some pitiful portion with the insolence of a gift?

Thirdly, Because the idea of hereditary legislators is as inconsistent as that of hereditary judges, or hereditary juries; and as absurd as an hereditary mathematician, or an hereditary wise man; and as ridiculous as an hereditary poet-laureate.

Fourthly, Because a body of men holding themselves accountable to nobody, ought not to be trusted by any body.

Fifthly, Because it is continuing the uncivilized principles of the governments founded in conquest, and the base idea of man having property in man, and governing him by personal right.

Sixthly, Because aristocracy has a tendency to degenerate the human species. By the universal economy of nature it is known, and by the instance of the Jews it is proved, that the human species has a tendency to degenerate, in any small number of persons, when separated from the general stock of society, and intermarrying constantly with each other. It defeats even its pretended end, and becomes in time the opposite of what is noble in man. Mr. Burke talks of nobility; let him show what it is. The greatest characters the world has known, have risen on the democratic floor. Aristocracy has not been able to keep a proportionate pace with democracy. The artificial NOBLE shrinks into a dwarf before the NOBLE of Nature; and in the few instances of those (for there are some in all countries) in whom nature, as by a miracle, has survived in aristocracy, THOSE MEN DESPISE IT. But it is time to proceed to a new subject.

The French constitution has reformed the condition of the clergy. It has raised the income of the lower and middle classes, and taken from the higher. None is now

less than twelve hundred livres (fifty pounds sterling), nor any higher then about two or three thousand pounds. What will Mr. Burke place against this? Hear what he says:

He says, "That the people of England can see without pain or grudging, an archbishop precede a duke; they can see a bishop of Durham, or a bishop of Winchester, in possession of £10,000 a year; and cannot see why it is in worse hands than estates to the like amount in the hands of this earl or that 'squire." And Mr. Burke offers this as an example to France.

As to the first part, whether the archbishop precedes the duke, or the duke the bishop, it is, I believe, to the people in general, somewhat like *Sternbold* and *Hopkins*, or *Hopkins* and *Sternbold;* you may put which you please first: and as I confess that I do not understand the merits of this case, I will not contend it with Mr. Burke.

But with respect to the latter, I have something to say. Mr. Burke has not put the case right. The comparison is out of order, by being put between the bishop and the earl or the 'squire. It ought to be put between the bishop and the curate, and then it will stand thus:—*The people of England can see without pain or grudging, a bishop of Durham, or a bishop of Winchester, in possession of ten thousand pounds a year, and a curate on thirty or forty pounds a year, or less.*—No, Sir, they certainly do not see those things without great pain or grudging. It is a case that applies itself to every man's sense of justice, and is one among many that calls aloud for a constitution.

In France, the cry of "*the church! the church!*" was repeated as often as in Mr. Burke's book, and as loudly as when the dissenter's bill was before the English parliament; but the generality of the French clergy were not to be deceived by this cry any longer. They knew,

that whatever the pretense might be, it was themselves who were one of the principal objects of it. It was the cry of the high beneficed clergy, to prevent any regulation of income taking place between those of ten thousand pounds a year and the parish priest. They, therefore, joined their case to those of every other oppressed class of men, and by this union obtained redress.

The French constitution has abolished tithes, that source of perpetual discontent between the tithe-holder and the parishioner. When land is held on tithe, it is in the condition of an estate held between two parties; the one receiving one-tenth, and the other nine-tenths of the produce: and, consequently, on principles of equity, if the estate can be improved, and made to produce by that improvement double or treble what it did before, or in any other ratio, the expense of such improvement ought to be borne in like proportion between the parties who are to share the produce. But this is not the case in tithes; the farmer bears the whole expense, and the tithe-holder takes a tenth of the improvement, in addition to the original tenth, and by this means gets the value of two-tenths instead of one. This is another case that calls for a constitution.

The French constitution hath abolished or renounced *toleration*, and *intolerance* also, and hath established UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CONSCIENCE.

Toleration is not the *opposite* of intoleration, but is the *counterfeit* of it. Both are despotisms. The one assumes to itself the right of withholding liberty of conscience, and the other of granting it. The one is the pope, armed with fire and faggot, and the other is the pope selling or granting indulgences. The former is church and state, and the latter is church and traffic.

But toleration may be viewed in a much stronger light. Man worships not himself, but his Maker: and the liberty of conscience which he claims, is not for the service of

himself, but of his God. In this case, therefore, we must necessarily have the associated idea of two beings; the *mortal* who renders the worship, and the *immortal being* who is worshipped. Toleration therefore, places itself not between man and man, nor between church and church, nor between one denomination of religion and another, but between God and man; between the being who worships, and the *being* who is worshipped; and by the same act of assumed authority by which it tolerates man to pay his worship, it presumptuously and blasphemously sets up itself to tolerate the Almighty to receive it.

Were a bill brought into parliament, entitled, "An *act* to tolerate or grant liberty to the Almighty to receive the worship of a Jew or a Turk," or "to prohibit the Almighty from receiving it," all men would startle, and call it blasphemy. There would be an uproar. The presumption of toleration in religious matters would then, present itself unmasked; but the presumption is not the less because the name of "Man" only appears to those laws, for the associated idea of the *worshipper* and the *worshipped* cannot be separated. Who, then, art thou, vain dust and ashes! by whatever name thou art called, whether a King, a Bishop, a Church or a State, a Parliament or any thing else, that obtrudest thine insignificance between the soul of man and his Maker? Mind thine own concerns. If he believes not as thou believest, it is a proof that thou believest not as he believeth, and there is no earthly power can determine between you.

With respect to what are called denominations of religion, if every one is left to judge of his own religion, there is no such thing as a religion that is wrong; but if they are to judge of each other's religion, there is no such thing as a religion that is right; and therefore all the world is right, or all the world is wrong. But with respect to religion itself, without regard to names, and as directing

itself from the universal family of mankind to the divine object of all adoration, *it is man bringing to his Maker the fruits of his heart;* and though these fruits may differ from each other like the fruits of the earth, the grateful tribute of every one is accepted.

A bishop of Durham, or a bishop of Winchester, or the archbishop who heads the dukes, will not refuse a tithe-sheaf of wheat, because it is not a cock of hay; nor a cock of hay, because it is not a sheaf of wheat; nor a pig, because it is neither the one nor the other: but these same persons, under the figure of an established church, will not permit their Maker to receive the various tithes of man's devotion.

One of the continual choruses of Mr. Burke's book, is "church and state." He does not mean some one particular church, or some one particular state, but any church and state; and he uses the term as a general figure to hold forth the political doctrine of always uniting the church with the state in every country, and he censures the National Assembly for not having done this in France. Let us bestow a few thoughts on this subject.

All religions are in their nature mild and benign, and united with principles of morality. They could not have made proselytes at first, by professing any thing that was vicious, cruel, persecuting or immoral. Like every thing else, they had their beginning; and they proceeded by persuasion, exhortation, and example. How then is it that they lose their native mildness, and become morose and intolerant?

It proceeds from the connection which Mr. Burke recommends. By engendering the church with the state, a sort of mule animal, capable only of destroying, and not of breeding up, is produced, called, *The Church established by Law.* It is a stranger, even from its birth to any parent mother on which it is begotten, and whom in time it kicks out and destroys.

The inquisition in Spain does not proceed from the religion originally professed, but from this mule animal, engendered between the church and the state. The burnings in Smithfield proceeded from the same heterogeneous production; and it was the regeneration of this strange animal in England afterwards, that renewed rancor and irreligion among the inhabitants, and that drove the people called Quakers and Dissenters to America. Persecution is not an original feature in *any* religion; but it is always the strongly marked feature of all law-religions, or religions established by law. Take away the law-establishment, and every religion reasumes its original benignity. In America, a Catholic Priest is a good citizen, a good character, and a good neighbor; an Episcopalian Minister is of the same description: and this proceeds, independently of the men, from there being no law-establishment in America.

If also we view this matter in a temporal sense, we shall see the ill effects it has had on the prosperity of nations. The union of church and state has impoverished Spain. The revoking the edict of Nantes drove the silk manufacture from France into England; and church and state are now driving the cotton manufacture from England to America and France. Let then Mr. Burke continue to preach his anti-political doctrine of Church and State. It will do some good. The National Assembly will not follow his advice, but will benefit by his folly. It was by observing the ill effects of it in England, that America has been warned against it; and it is by experiencing them in France, that the National Assembly have abolished it, and, like America, have established UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CONSCIENCE, AND UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CITIZENSHIP.*

* When in any country we see extraordinary circumstances taking place, they naturally lead any man who has a talent for observation and investigation, to enquire into the causes. The manufactures of Manchester, Birmingham and Sheffield, are the principal manufactures in England. From whence did this arise? A little observation will explain the case. The principal, and the generality of the inhabitants

I will here cease the comparison with respect to the principles of the French constitution, and conclude this part of the subject with a few observations on the organization of the formal parts of the French and English governments.

The executive power in each country is in the hands of a person styled the King; but the French constitution distinguishes between the King and Sovereign: It considers the station of King as official, and places Sovereignity in the nation.

The representatives of the nation, who compose the National Assembly, and who are the legislative power, originate in and from the people by election, as an inherent right in the people. In England it is otherwise; and this arises from the original establishment of what is called its monarchy; for, as by the conquest all the rights of the people or the nation were absorbed into the hands of the Conqueror, and who added the title of King to that of Conqueror, those same matters which in France are now held as rights in the people, or in the

of those places, are not of what is called in England, *the church established by law;* and they, or their fathers (for it is within but a few years) withdrew from the persecution of the chartered towns, where test-laws more particularly operate, and established a sort of asylum for themselves in those places. It was the only asylum that then offered, for the rest of Europe was worse. But the case is now changing. France and America bid all comers welcome, and initiate them into all the rights of citizenship. Policy and interest, therefore, will, but perhaps too late, dictate in England, what reason and justice could not. Those manufactures are withdrawing, and are arising in other places. There is now erecting at Passey, three miles from Paris, a large cotton mill, and several are already erected in America. Soon after the rejecting the bill for repealing the test-law, one of the richest manufacturers in England said in my hearing, "England, Sir, is not a country for a dissenter to live in—we must go to France." These are truths, and it is doing justice to both parties to tell them. It is chiefly the dissenters who have carried English manufactures to the height they are now at, and the same men have it in their power to carry them away; and though those manufactures would afterwards continue to be made in those places, the foreign market will be lost. There are frequently appearing in the London Gazette, extracts from certain acts to prevent machines, and as far as it can extend to persons, from going out of the country. It appears from these, that the ill effects of the test-laws and church-establishment begin to be much suspected: but the remedy of force can never supply the remedy of reason. In the progress of less than a century, all the unrepresented part of England, of all denominations, which is at least a hundred times the most numerous, may begin to feel the necessity of a constitution, and then all those matters will come regularly before them.

nation, are held in England as grants from what is called the Crown. The Parliament in England, in both its branches, was erected by patents from the descendants of the Conqueror. The House of Commons did not originate as a matter of right in the people to delegate or elect, but as a grant or boon.

By the French Constitution, the Nation is always named before the King. The third article of the Declaration of Rights says, "*The nation is essentially the source* (or fountain) *of all sovereignty.*" Mr. Burke argues, that, in England, a King is the fountain—that he is the fountain of all honor. But as this idea is evidently descended from the Conquest, I shall make no other remark upon it, than that it is the nature of conquest to turn every thing upside down; and as Mr. Burke will not be refused the privilege of speaking twice, and as there are but two parts in the figure, the *fountain* and the *spout*, he will be right the second time.

The French constitution puts the legislative before the executive; the Law before the King; *La Loi, Le Roi.* This also is in the natural order of things; because laws must have existence, before they can have execution.

A King in France does not in addressing himself to the National Assembly, say, "My assembly," similar to the phrase used in England of *my* "Parliament;" neither can he use it consistently with the constitution, nor could it be admitted. There may be propriety in the use of it in England, because as is before mentioned, both Houses of Parliament originated from what is called the Crown by patent or boon—and not from the inherent rights of the people, as the National Assembly does in France, and whose name designates its origin.

The President of the National Assembly does not ask the King *to grant to the Assembly liberty of speech*, as is the case with the English House of Commons. The constitutional dignity of the National Assembly cannot

debase itself. Speech is, in the first place, one of the natural rights of man always retained; and with respect to the National Assembly, the use of it is their *duty*, and the nation is their *authority*. They were elected by the greatest body of men exercising the right of election the European world ever saw. They sprung not from the filth of rotten boroughs, nor are they the vassal representatives of aristocratical ones. Feeling the proper dignity of their character, they support it. Their parliamentary language, whether for or against a question, is free, bold, and manly, and extends to all the parts and circumstances of the case. If any matter or subject respecting the executive department, or the person who presides in it (the King), comes before them, it is debated on with the spirit of men, and the language of gentlemen; and their answer, or their address, is returned in the same style. They stand not aloof with the gaping vacuity of vulgar ignorance, nor bend with the cringe of sycophantic insignificance. The graceful pride of truth knows no extremes, and preserves, in every latitude of life, the right-angled character of man.

Let us now look to the other side of the question. In the addresses of the English Parliaments to their Kings, we see neither the intrepid spirit of the old Parliaments of France, nor the serene dignity of the present National Assembly: neither do we see in them any thing of the style of English manners, which border somewhat on bluntness. Since then they are neither of foreign extraction, nor naturally of English production, their origin must be sought for elsewhere, and that origin is the Norman Conquest. They are evidently of the vassalage class of manners, and emphatically mark the prostrate distance that exists in no other condition of men than between the conqueror and the conquered. That this vassalage idea and style of speaking was not got rid of even at the Revolution of 1688, is evident from

the declaration of Parliament to William and Mary, in these words: "We do most humbly and faithfully *submit* ourselves, our heirs and posterities, for ever." Submission is wholly a vassalage term, repugnant to the dignity of Freedom, and an echo of the language used at the Conquest.

As the estimation of all things is by comparison, the Revolution of 1688, however from circumstances it may have been exalted beyond its value, will find its level. It is already on the wane, eclipsed by the enlarging orb of reason, and the luminous revolutions of America and France. In less than another century, it will go, as well as Mr. Burke's labors, "to the family vault of all the Capulets." Mankind will then scarcely believe that a country calling itself free, would send to Holland for a man, and clothe him with power, on purpose to put themselves in fear of him, and give him almost a million sterling a year for leave to *submit* themselves and their posterity, like bond-men and bond-women, for ever.

But there is a truth that ought to be made known: I have had the opportunity of seeing it; which is, *that, notwithstanding appearances, there is not any description of men that despise monarchy so much as courtiers.* But they well know, that if it were seen by others, as it is by them, the juggle could not be kept up. They are in the condition of men who get their living by a show, and to whom the folly of that show is so familiar that they ridicule it; but were the audience to be made as wise in this respect as themselves, there would be an end to the show and the profits with it. The difference between a republican and a courtier with respect to monarchy, is, that the one opposes monarchy believing it to be something, and the other laughs at it, knowing it to be nothing.

As I used sometimes to correspond with Mr. Burke, believing him then to be a man of sounder principles

than his book shows him to be, I wrote to him last winter from Paris, and gave him an account how prosperously matters were going on. Among other subjects in that letter, I referred to the happy situation the National Assembly were placed in ; that they had taken a ground on which their moral duty and their political interest were united. They have not to hold out a language which they do not themselves believe, for the fraudulent purpose of making others believe it. Their station requires no artifice to support it, and can only be maintained by enlightening mankind. It is not their interest to cherish ignorance, but to dispel it. They are not in the case of a ministerial or an opposition party in England, who, though they are opposed, are still united to keep up the common mystery. The National Assembly must throw open a magazine of light. It must show man the proper character of man ; and the nearer it can bring him to that standard, the stronger the National Assembly becomes.

In contemplating the French constitution, we see in it a rational order of things. The principles harmonize with the forms, and both with their origin. It may perhaps be said as an excuse for bad forms, that they are nothing more than forms ; but this is a mistake. Forms grow out of principles, and operate to continue the principles they grow from. It is impossible to practise a bad form on any thing but a bad principle. It cannot be ingrafted on a good one ; and wherever the forms in any government are bad, it is a certain indication that the principles are bad also.

I will here finally close the subject. I began it by remarking that Mr. Burke had *voluntarily* declined going into a comparison of the English and French constitutions. He apologizes (p. 241) for not doing it, by saying that he had not time. Mr. Burke's book was upwards of eight months in hand, and it extended to a volume of

three hundred and sixty-six pages. As his omission does injury to his cause, his apology makes it worse; and men on the English side of the water will begin to consider, whether there is not some radical defect in what is called the English Constitution, that made it necessary for Mr. Burke to suppress the comparison, to avoid bringing it into view.

As Mr. Burke has not written on constitutions, so neither has he written on the French Revolution. He gives no account of its commencement or its progress. He only expresses his wonder. "It looks," says he, "to me as if I were in a great crisis, not of the affairs of France alone, but of all Europe, perhaps of more than Europe. All circumstances taken together, the French Revolution is the most astonishing that has hitherto happened in the world."

As wise men are astonished at foolish things, and other people at wise ones, I know not on which ground to account for Mr. Burke's astonishment; but certain it is that he does not understand the French Revolution. It has apparently burst forth like a creation from a chaos, but it is no more than the consequence of a mental Revolution previously existing in France. The mind of the nation had changed beforehand, and the new order of things has naturally followed the new order of thoughts. I will here, as concisely as I can, trace out the growth of the French Revolution, and mark the circumstances that have contributed to produce it.

The despotism of Louis XIV. united with the gaiety of his court, and the gaudy ostentation of his character, had so humbled, and at the same time so fascinated the mind of France, that the people appear to have lost all sense of their own dignity, in contemplating that of their Grand Monarch: and the whole reign of Louis XV., remarkable only for weakness and effeminacy, made no other alteration than that of spreading a sort of lethargy

over the nation, from which it showed no disposition to rise.

The only signs which appeared of the spirit of Liberty during those periods, are to be found in the writings of the French philosophers. Montesquieu, president of the Parliament of Bourdeaux, went as far as a writer under a despotic government could well proceed: and being obliged to divide himself between principle and prudence, his mind often appears under a veil, and we ought to give him credit for more than he has expressed.

Voltaire, who was both the flatterer and satirist of despotism, took another line. His forte lay in exposing and ridiculing the superstitions which priestcraft, united with statecraft, had interwoven with governments. It was not from the purity of his principles, or his love of mankind, (for satire and philanthropy are not naturally concordant,) but from his strong capacity of seeing folly in its true shape, and his irresistible propensity to expose it, that he made those attacks. They were however as formidable as if the motives had been virtuous; and he merits the thanks rather than the esteem of mankind.

On the contrary, we find in the writings of Rousseau and the Abbé Raynal, a loveliness of sentiment in favor of liberty, that excites respect, and elevates the human faculties; but having raised this animation, they do not direct its operations, but leave the mind in love with an object, without describing the means of possessing it.

The writings of Quesnay, Turgot, and the friends of these authors, are of a serious kind; but they labored under the same disadvantage with Montesquieu; their writings abound with moral maxims of government, but are rather directed to economize and reform the administration of the government, than the government itself.

But all those writings and many others had their weight; and by the different manner in which they treated the subject of government, — Montesquieu by his

judgment and knowledge of laws, Voltaire by his wit, Roussaeu and Raynal by their animation, and Quesnay and Turgot by their moral maxims and systems of economy, readers of every class met with something to their taste, and a spirit of political enquiry began to diffuse itself through the nation at the time the dispute between England and the then colonies of America broke out.

In the war which France afterwards engaged in, it is very well known that the nation appeared to be beforehand with the French ministry. Each of them had its view: but those views were directed to different objects; the one sought liberty, and the other retaliation on England. The French officers and soldiers who after this went to America, were eventually placed in the school of Freedom, and learned the practice as well as the principles of it by heart.

As it was impossible to separate the military events which took place in America from the principles of the American revolution, the publication of those events in France necessarily connected themselves with the principles which produced them. Many of the facts were in themselves principles; such as the declaration of American independence, and the treaty of alliance between France and America, which recognized the natural right of man, and justified resistance to oppression.

The then Minister of France, Count Vergennes, was not the friend of America; and it is both justice and gratitude to say, that it was the Queen of France who gave the cause of America a fashion at the French Court. Count Vergennes was the personal and social friend of Dr. Franklin; and the Doctor had obtained, by his sensible gracefulness, a sort of influence over him; but with respect to principles, Count Vergennes was a despot.

The situation of Dr. Franklin as Minister from America to France, should be taken into the chain of circumstances. The diplomatic character is of itself the

narrowest sphere of society that man can act in. It forbids intercourse by a reciprocity of suspicion; and a diplomatist is a sort of unconnected atom, continually repelling and repelled. But this was not the case with Dr. Franklin. He was not the diplomatist of a Court but of MAN. His character as a philosopher had been long established, and his circle of society in France was universal.

Count Vergennes resisted for a considerable time the publication in France of the American constitutions, translated into the French language; but even in this he was obliged to give way to public opinion, and a sort of propriety in admitting to appear what he had undertaken to defend. The American constitutions were to liberty, what a grammar is to language: they define its parts of speech, and practically construct them into syntax.

The peculiar situation of the then Marquis de la Fayette is another link in the great chain. He served in America as an American officer under a commission of Congress, and by the universality of his acquaintance, was in close friendship with the civil government of America, as well as with the military line. He spoke the language of the country, entered into the discussions on the principles of government, and was always a welcome friend at any election.

When the war closed, a vast reinforcement to the cause of Liberty spread itself over France, by the return of the French officers and soldiers. A knowledge of the practice was then joined to the theory; and all that was wanting to give it a real existence, was opportunity. Man cannot, properly speaking, make circumstances for his purpose, but he always has it in his power to improve them when they occur; and this was the case in France.

M. Neckar was displaced in May 1781; and by the ill management of the finances afterwards, and particularly during the extravagant administration of M. Calonne,

the revenue of France, which was nearly twenty-four millions sterling *per* year, was become unequal to the expenditure, not because the revenue had decreased, but because the expenses had increased; and this was the circumstance which the nation laid hold of to bring forward a revolution. The English Minister, Mr. Pitt, has frequently alluded to the state of the French finances in his budgets, without understanding the subject. Had the French Parliaments been as ready to register edicts for new taxes, as an English Parliament is to grant them, there had been no derangement in the finances, nor yet any revolution; but this will better explain itself as I proceed.

It will be necessary here to show how taxes were formerly raised in France. The King, or rather the Court or Ministry acting under the use of that name, framed the edicts for taxes at their own discretion, and sent them to the Parliaments to be registered; for until they were registered by the Parliaments, they were not operative. Disputes had long existed between the Court and the Parliaments with respect to the extent of the Parliament's authority on this head. The Court insisted that the authority of Parliaments went no farther than to remonstrate or show reasons against the tax, reserving to itself the right of determining whether the reasons were well or ill-founded; and in consequence thereof, either to withdraw the edict as a matter of choice, or to *order* it to be enregistered as a matter of authority. The Parliaments on their part insisted, that they had not only a right to remonstrate, but to reject; and on this ground they were always supported by the Nation.

But, to return to the order of my narrative. M. Calonne wanted money; and as he knew the sturdy disposition of the Parliaments with respect to new taxes, he ingeniously sought either to approach them by a more gentle means than that of direct authority, or to get over their heads

by a manœuvre: and, for this purpose, he revived the project of assembling a body of men from the several provinces, under the style of an "Assembly of the Notables," or Men of Note, who met in 1787, and who were either to recommend taxes to the Parliaments, or to act as a Parliament themselves. An Assembly under this name had been called in 1617.

As we are to view this as the first practical step towards the revolution, it will be proper to enter into some particulars respecting it. The Assembly of the Notables has in some places been mistaken for the States-General, but was wholly a different body; the States-General being always by election. The persons who composed the Assembly of the Notables were all nominated by the King, and consisted of one hundred and forty members. But as M. Calonne could not depend upon a majority of this Assembly in his favor, he very ingeniously arranged them in such a manner as to make forty-four a majority of one hundred and forty: to effect this, he disposed of them into seven separate committees, of twenty members each. Every general question was to be decided, not by a majority of persons, but by a majority of committees; and as eleven votes would make a majority in a committee, and four committees a majority of seven, M. Calonne had good reason to conclude, that as forty-four would determine any general question, he could not be out-voted. But all his plans deceived him, and in the event became his overthrow.

The then Marquis de la Fayette was placed in the second committee, of which Count d'Artois was president: and as money-matters was the object, it naturally brought into view every circumstance connected with it. M. de la Fayette made a verbal charge against Calonne, for selling crown-lands to the amount of two millions of livres, in a manner that appeared to be unknown to the King. The Count D'Artois (as if to intimidate, for the

Bastille was then in being) asked the Marquis, if he would render the charge in writing? He replied that he would. The Count D'Artois did not demand it, but brought a message from the King to that purport. M. de la Fayette then delivered in his charge in writing, to be given to the King, undertaking to support it. No farther proceedings were had upon this affair; but M. Calonne was soon after dismissed by the King, and set off to England.

As M. de la Fayette, from the experience of what he had seen in America, was better acquainted with the science of civil government than the generality of the members who composed the Assembly of the Notables could then be, the brunt of the business fell considerably to his share. The plan of those who had a constitution in view, was to contend with the Court on the ground of taxes, and some of them openly professed their object. Disputes frequently arose between Count D'Artois and M. de la Fayette, upon various subjects. With respect to the arrears already incurred, the latter proposed to remedy them, by accommodating the expenses to the revenue, instead of the revenue to the expenses; and as objects of reform, he proposed to abolish the Bastille, and all the State-prisons throughout the nation, (the keeping of which was attended with great expense), and to suppress *Lettres de Cachet.* But those matters were not then much attended to; and with respect to *Lettres de Cachet, a majority of the Nobles appeared to be in favor of them.*

On the subject of supplying the Treasury by new taxes the Assembly declined taking the matter on themselves, concurring in the opinion that they had not authority. In a debate on this subject, M. de la Fayette said that raising money by taxes could only be done by a National Assembly, freely elected by the people, and acting as their representatives. Do you mean, said Count D'Artois,

the *States General?* M. de la Fayette replied, that he did. Will you, said the Count D'Artois, sign what you say, to be given to the King? The other replied, that he not only would do this, but that he would go farther, and say, that the effectual mode would be, for the King to agree to the establishment of a Constitution.

As one of the plans had thus failed, that of getting the Assembly to act as a Parliament, the other came into view, that of recommending. On this subject, the Assembly agreed to recommend two new taxes to be enregistered by the Parliament, the one a stamp tax and the other a territorial tax, or sort of land tax. The two have been estimated at about five millions sterling per annum. We have now to turn our attention to the Parliaments, on whom the business was again devolving.

The Archbishop of Thoulouse (since Archbishop of Sens, and now a Cardinal) was appointed to the administration of the finances, soon after the dismission of Calonne. He was also made Prime Minister, an office that did not always exist in France. When this office did not exist, the chief of each of the principal departments transacted business immediately with the King; but when a Prime Minister was appointed, they did business only with him. The Archbishop arrived to more state-authority than any minister since the Duke de Choiseul, and the nation was strongly disposed in his favor; but by a line of conduct scarcely to be accounted for, he perverted every opportunity, turned out a despot, and sunk into disgrace, and a Cardinal.

The Assembly of the Notables having broken up, the new minister sent the edicts for the two new taxes recommended by the Assembly to the Parliaments, to be enregistered. They of course came first before the Parliament of Paris, who returned for answer; *That with such a revenue as the nation then supported, the name of taxes*

ought not to be mentioned, but for the purpose of reducing them; and threw both the edicts out.*

On this refusal, the Parliament was ordered to Versailles, where in the usual form, the King held, what under the old government was called a Bed of Justice: and the two edicts were enregistered in presence of the Parliament, by an order of State, in the manner mentioned in page 78. On this the Parliament immediately returned to Paris, renewed their session in form, and ordered the enregistering to be struck out, declaring that everything done at Versailles was illegal. All the members of Parliament were then served with *Lettres de Cachet*, and exiled to Trois; but as they continued as inflexible in exile as before, and as vengeance did not supply the place of taxes, they were after a short time recalled to Paris.

The edicts were again tendered to them, and the Count d'Artois undertook to act as representative of the King. For this purpose, he came from Versailles to Paris, in a train of procession; and the Parliament was assembled to receive him. But show and parade had lost their influence in France; and whatever ideas of importance he might set off with, he had to return with those of mortification and disappointment. On alighting from his carriage to ascend the steps of the Parliament House, the crowd (which was numerously collected) threw out trite expressions, saying: "This is Monsieur d'Artois, who wants more of our money to spend." The marked disapprobation which he saw, impressed him with apprehensions; and the word *Aux arms!* (*To arms!*) was given out by the officer of the guard who attended him. It was so loudly vociferated, that it echoed through the avenues of the House, and produced a temporary confusion: I was then standing in one of the apartments

* When the English minister, Mr. Pitt, mentions the French finances again in the English parliament, it would be well that he noticed this as an example.

through which he had to pass, and could not avoid reflecting how wretched was the condition of a disrespected man.

He endeavored to impress the Parliament by great words, and opened his authority by saying, "The King, our Lord and Master." The Parliament received him very coolly, and with their usual determination not to register the taxes; and in this manner the interview ended.

After this a new subject took place. In the various debates and contests that arose between the Court and the Parliaments on the subject of taxes, the Parliament of Paris at last declared, that although it had been customary for Parliaments to enregister edicts for taxes as a matter of convenience, the right belonged only to the States-General; and that, therefore, the Parliaments could no longer with propriety continue to debate on what it had not authority to act. The King, after this, came to Paris, and held a meeting with the Parliament, in which he continued from ten in the morning till about six in the evening; and, in a manner that appeared to proceed from him, as if unconsulted upon with the cabinet or the ministry, gave his word to the Parliament, that the States-General should be convened.

But after this, another scene arose, on a ground different from all the former. The minister and the cabinet were averse to calling the States-General: they well knew, that if the States-General were assembled, that themselves must fall; and as the King had not mentioned *any time*, they hit on a project calculated to elude, without appearing to oppose.

For this purpose, the Court set about making a sort of constitution itself; it was principally the work of M. Lamoignon, Keeper of the Seals, who afterwards shot himself. This new arrangement consisted in establishing a body under the name of a *Cour pléniere*, or full Court,

in which were invested all the power that the government might have occasion to make use of. The persons composing this Court to be nominated by the King; the contended right of taxation was given up on the part of the King, and a new criminal code of laws, and law proceedings, was substituted in the room of the former. The thing, in many points, contained better principles than those upon which the government had hitherto been administered: but, with respect to the *Cour plénicre*, it was no other than a medium through which despotism was to pass, without appearing to act directly from itself.

The Cabinet had high expectations from their new contrivance. The persons who were to compose the *Cour plénicre*, were already nominated; and as it was necessary to carry a fair appearance, many of the best characters in the nation were appointed among the number. It was to commence on the 8th of May, 1788: but an opposition arose to it, on two grounds—the one as to principle, the other as to form.

On the ground of principle it was contended, that government had not a right to alter itself; and that if the practice was once admitted, it would grow into a principle, and be made a precedent for any alterations the government might wish to establish; that the right of altering the government was a national right, and not a right of government. And on the ground of form, it was contended that the *Cour plénicre* was nothing more than a larger Cabinet.

The then Dukes de la Rouchefoucault, Luxembourg, de Noailles, and many others, refused to accept the nomination, and strenuously opposed the whole plan. When the edict for establishing this new Court was sent to the Parliaments to be enregistered and put into execution, they resisted also. The Parliament of Paris not only refused but denied the authority; and h e contest

renewed itself between the Parliament and the Cabinet more strongly than ever. While the Parliament was sitting in debate on this subject, the ministry ordered a regiment of soldiers to surround the House, and form a blockade. The Members sent out for beds and provision, and lived as in a besieged citadel; and as this had no effect, the commanding officer was ordered to enter the Parliament House and seize them, which he did, and some of the principal members were shut up in different prisons. About the same time a deputation of persons arrived from the province of Brittany, to remonstrate against the establishment of the *Cour pléniere;* and those the Archbishop sent to the Bastille. But the spirit of the Nation was not to be overcome; and it was so fully sensible of the strong ground it had taken, that of withholding taxes, that it contented itself with keeping up a sort of quiet resistance, which effectually overthrew all the plans at that time formed against it. The project of the *Cour pléniere* was at last obliged to be given up, and the Prime Minister not long afterwards followed its fate; and M. Neckar was recalled into office.

The attempt to establish the *Cour pléniere* had an effect upon the Nation which was not anticipated. It was a sort of new form of government, that insensibly served to put the old one out of sight, and to unhinge it from the superstitious authority of antiquity. It was government dethroning government; and the old one, by attempting to make a new one, made a chasm.

The failure of this scheme renewed the subject of convening the States-General: and this gave rise to a new series of politics. There was no settled form for convening the States-General; all that it positively meant, was a deputation from what was then called the Clergy, the Nobility and the Commons; but their numbers, or their proportions, had not been always the same. They had been convened only on extraordinary occasions, the

last of which was in 1614; their numbers were then in equal proportions, and they voted by orders.

It could not well escape the sagacity of M. Neckar, that the mode of 1614 would answer neither the purpose of the then Government, nor of the Nation. As matters were at that time circumstanced, it would have been too contentious to agree upon any thing. The debates would have been endless upon privileges and exemptions, in which neither the wants of the Government, nor the wishes of the Nation for a constitution, would have been attended to. But as he did not choose to take the decision upon himself, he summoned again the Assembly of the *Notables*, and referred it to them. This body was in general interested in the decision, being chiefly of the aristocracy and the high paid clergy; and they decided, in favor of the mode of 1614. This decision was against the sense of the Nation, and also against the wishes of the Court; for the Aristocracy opposed itself to both, and contended for privileges independent of either. The subject was then taken up by the Parliament, who recommended that the number of the Commons should be equal to the other two; and that they should all sit in one house, and vote in one body. The number finally determined on was twelve hundred: six hundred to be chosen by the Commons (and this was less than their proportion ought to have been when their worth and consequence is considered on a national scale) three hundred by the Clergy, and three hundred by the Aristocracy; but with respect to the mode of assembling themselves, whether together or apart, or the manner in which they should vote, those matters were referred.*

* Mr. Burke (and I must take the liberty of telling him he is very unacquainted with French affairs,) speaking upon this subject, says, "The first thing that struck me in the calling the States-General, was a great departure from the ancient course;" and he soon after says, "From the moment I read the list, I saw distinctly, and very nearly as it has happened, all that was to follow." Mr. Burke certainly did not see all that was to follow. I endeavored to impress him, as well before as after the States-General met, that there would be a *revolution*; but was not able to make him see it,

The election that followed, was not a contested election, but an animated one. The candidates were not men but principles. Societies were formed in Paris, and committees of correspondence and communication established throughout the nation, for the purpose of enlightening the people, and explaining to them the principles of civil government; and so orderly was the election conducted, that it did not give rise even to the rumor of tumult.

The States-General were to meet at Versailles in April 1789, but did not assemble till May. They situated themselves in three separate chambers, or rather the Clergy and the Aristocracy withdrew each into a separate chamber. The majority of the Aristocracy claimed what they called the privilege of voting as a separate body, and of giving their consent or their negative in that manner; and many of the bishops and the high-beneficed clergy claimed the same privilege on the part of their Order.

The *Tiers Etat* (as they were then called) disowned any knowledge of artificial Orders and artificial privileges; and they were not only resolute on this point, but somewhat disdainful. They began to consider aristocracy as a kind of fungus growing out of the corruption of society, that could not be admitted even as a branch of it; and from the disposition the aristocracy had shown by upholding Lettres de Cachet, and in sundry other instances, it was manifest that no constitution could be

neither would he believe it. How then he could distinctly see all the parts, when the whole was out of sight, is beyond my comprehension. And with respect to the "departure from the ancient "course," besides the natural weakness of the remark, it shows that he is unacquainted with circumstances. The departure was necessary, from the experience had upon it, that the ancient course was a bad one. The States-General of 1614 were called at the commencement of the civil war in the minority of Louis XIII. But by the clash of arranging them by orders, they increased the confusion they were called to compose. The author of *L'Intrigue du Cabinet* (Intrigue of the Cabinet), who wrote before any revolution was thought of in France, speaking of the States-General of 1614, says, "They held the public in suspense five months; and by the questions agitated therein, and the heat with which they were put, it appears that the great (*les grands*) thought more to satisfy their *particular* passions, than to procure the good of the nation; and the whole time passed away in altercations, ceremonies and parade."—*L'Intrigue du Cabinet. vol. 1.*

formed by admitting men in any other character than as National Men.

After various altercations on this head, the Tiers Etat or Commons (as they were then called) declared themselves (on a motion made for that purpose by the Abbé Sieyes) "THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATION; *and that the two Orders could be considered but as deputies of corporations, and could only have a deliberative voice when they assembled in a national character with the national representatives.*" This proceeding extinguished the style of *Etats Généraux*, or States-General, and erected it into the style it now bears, that of L'Assemble Nationale, or National Assembly.

This motion was not made in a precipitate manner: It was the result of cool deliberation, and concerted between the national representatives and the patriotic members of the two chambers, who saw into the folly, mischief, and injustice of artificial privileged distinctions. It was become evident, that no constitution, worthy of being called by that name, could be established on any thing less than a national ground. The aristocracy had hitherto opposed the despotism of the Court and affected the language of patriotism; but it opposed it as its rival (as the English Barons opposed King John), and it now opposed the nation from the same motives.

On carrying this motion, the national representatives, as had been concerted, sent an invitation to the two chambers, to unite with them in a national character, and proceed to business. A majority of the clergy, chiefly of the parish priests, withdrew from the clerical chamber, and joined the nation; and forty-five from the other chamber joined in like manner. There is a sort of secret history belonging to this last circumstance, which is necessary to its explanation: It was not judged prudent that all the patriotic members of the chamber styling itself the Nobles, should quit it at once; and in

consequence of this arrangement, they drew off by degrees, always leaving some, as well to reason the case, as to watch the suspected. In a little time, the numbers increased from forty-five to eighty, and soon after to a greater number; which, with a majority of the clergy, and the whole of the national representatives, put the malcontents in a very diminutive condition.

The King, who, very different from the general class called by that name, is a man of a good heart, showed himself disposed to recommend an union of the three chambers, on the ground the National Assembly had taken; but the malcontents exerted themselves to prevent it, and began now to have another project in view. Their numbers consisted of a majority of the aristocratical chamber, and a minority of the clerical chamber, chiefly of bishops and high-beneficed clergy; and these men were determined to put every thing to issue, as well by strength as by stratagem. They had no objection to a constitution; but it must be such a one as themselves should dictate, and suited to their own views and particular situations. On the other hand, the Nation disowned knowing any thing of them but as citizens, and was determined to shut out all such upstart pretensions. The more aristocracy appeared, the more it was despised; there was a visible imbecility and want of intellects in the majority, a sort of *je ne sais quoi*, that while it affected to be more than citizen, was less than man. It lost ground from contempt more than from hatred; and was rather jeered at as an ass, than dreaded as a lion. This is the general character of aristocracy, or what are called Nobles or Nobility, or rather No-ability, in all countries.

The plan of the malcontents consisted now of two things; either to deliberate and vote by chambers, (or orders), more especially on all questions respecting a constitution, (by which the aristocratical chamber would

have a negative on any article of the constitution); or, in case they could not accomplish this object, to overthrow the National Assembly entirely.

To effect one or other of these objects, they began now to cultivate a friendship with the despotism they had hitherto attempted to rival, and the Count D'Artois became their chief. The King (who has since declared himself deceived into their measures) held, according to the old form, *a Bed of Justice*, in which he accorded to the deliberation and vote *par tête* (by head) upon several subjects; but reserved the deliberation and vote upon all questions respecting a constitution, to the three chambers separately. The declaration of the King was made against the advice of M. Neckar, who now began to perceive that he was growing out of fashion at Court, and that another minister was in contemplation.

As the form of sitting in separate chambers was yet apparently kept up, though essentially destroyed, the national representatives, immediately after this declaration of the King, resorted to their own chambers to consult on a protest against it; and the minority of the chamber (calling itself the Nobles), who had joined the national cause, retired to a private house to consult in like manner. The malcontents had by this time concerted their measures with the Court, which Count D'Artois undertook to conduct; and as they saw from the discontent which the declaration excited, and the opposition making against it, that they could not obtain a control over the intended constitution by a separate vote, they prepared themselves for their final object — that of conspiring against the National Assembly, and overthrowing it.

The next morning, the door of the chamber of the National Assembly was shut against them, and guarded by troops; and the Members were refused admittance. On this they withdrew to a tennis-ground in the neigh-

borhood of Versailles, as the most convenient place they could find, and, after renewing their session, took an oath never to separate from each other, under any circumstances whatever, death excepted, until they had established a constitution. As the experiment of shutting up the house had no other effect than that of producing a closer connection in the Members, it was opened again the next day, and the public business recommenced in the usual place.

We are now to have in view the forming of the new Ministry, which was to accomplish the overthrow of the National Assembly. But as force would be necessary, orders were issued to assemble thirty thousand troops, the command of which was given to Broglio, one of the new-intended ministry, who was recalled from the country for this purpose. But as some management was necessary to keep this plan concealed till the moment it should be ready for execution, it is to this policy that a declaration made by the Count d'Artois must be attributed, and which is here proper to be introduced.

It could not but occur, that while the malcontents continued to resort to their chambers separate from the National Assembly, that more jealousy would be excited than if they were mixed with it, and that the plot might be suspected. But as they had taken their ground, and now wanted a pretence for quitting it, it was necessary that one should be devised. This was effectually accomplished by a declaration made by Count d'Artois, "*that if they took not a part in the National Assembly, the life of the King would be endangered*," on which they quitted their chambers, and mixed with the Assembly in one body.

At the time this declaration was made, it was generally treated as a piece of absurdity in the Count d'Artois, and calculated merely to relieve the outstanding Members of the two chambers from the diminutive situation they

were put in ; and if nothing more had followed, this conclusion would have been good. But as things best explain themselves by their events, this apparent union was only a cover to the machinations that were secretly going on ; and the declaration accommodated itself to answer that purpose. In a little time the National Assembly found itself surrounded by troops, and thousands more daily arriving. On this a very strong declaration was made by the National Assembly to the King, remonstrating on the impropriety of the measure, and demanding the reason. The King, who was not in the secret of this business, as himself afterwards declared, gave substantially for answer, that he had no other object in view than to preserve public tranquillity, which appeared to be much disturbed.

But in a few days from this time, the plot unravelled itself. M. Neckar and the Ministry were displaced, and a new one formed of the enemies of the Revolution ; and Broglio, with between twenty-five to thirty thousand foreign troops, was arrived to support them. The mask was now thrown off, and matters were come to a crisis. The event was, that in the space of three days, the new Ministry and all their abettors found it prudent to fly the nation ; the Bastille was taken, and Broglio and his foreign troops dispersed ; as is already related in a former part of this work.

There are some curious circumstances in the history of this short-lived ministry, and this brief attempt at a counter-revolution. The palace of Versailles, where the Court was sitting, was not more than four hundred yards distant from the hall where the National Assembly was sitting. The two places were at this moment like the separate headquarters of two combatant armies ; yet the Court was as perfectly ignorant of the information which had arrived from Paris to the National Assembly, as if it had resided at an hundred miles distance. The

then Marquis de la Fayette, who (as has been already mentioned) was chosen to preside in the National Assembly on this particular occasion, named, by order of the Assembly, three successive deputations to the King, on the day, and up to the evening on which the Bastille was taken, to inform and confer with him on the state of affairs; but the Ministry, who knew not so much as that it was attacked, precluded all communication, and were solacing themselves how dexterously they had succeeded: but in a few hours the accounts arrived so thick and fast, that they had to start from their desks and run: some set off in one disguise, and some in another, and none in their own character. Their anxiety now was to outride the news, lest they should be stopped, which, though it flew fast, flew not so fast as themselves.

It is worth remarking, that the National Assembly neither pursued those fugitive conspirators, nor took any notice of them, nor sought to retaliate in any shape whatever. Occupied with establishing a constitution, founded on the Rights of Man and the Authority of the People, the only authority on which Government has a right to exist in any country, the National Assembly felt none of those mean passions which mark the character of impertinent governments, founding themselves on their own authority, or on the absurdity of hereditary succession. It is the faculty of the human mind to become what it contemplates, and to act in unison with its object.

The conspiracy being thus dispersed, one of the first works of the National Assembly, instead of vindictive proclamations, as has been the case with other governments, published a Declaration of the Rights of Man, as the basis on which the new constitution was to be built, and which is here subjoined.

DECLARATION

OF THE

RIGHTS OF MAN AND OF CITIZENS.

By the National Assembly of France.

"THE Representatives of the people of FRANCE, formed into a NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, considering that ignorance, neglect, or contempt of human rights, are the sole causes of public misfortunes and corruptions of Government, have resolved to set forth in a solemn declaration, these natural, imprescriptible, and unalienable rights: that this declaration, being constantly present to the minds of the members of the body social, they may be ever kept attentive to their rights and their duties: that the acts of the legislative and executive powers of Government, being capable of being every moment compared with the end of political institutions, may be more respected: and also, that the future claims of the citizens, being directed by simple and incontestible principles, may always tend to the maintenance of the Constitution, and the general happiness.

"For these reasons the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY doth recognize and declare, in the presence of the Supreme Being, and with the hope of his blessing and favor, the following *sacred* rights of men and of citizens:

"I. *Men are born, and always continue, free, and equal in respect of their rights. Civil distinctions, therefore, can be founded only on public utility.*

"II. *The end of all political associations, is, the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man; and these rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance of oppression.*

"III. *The nation is essentially the source of all sovereignty; nor can any* INDIVIDUAL, *or* ANY BODY OF MEN, *be entitled to any authority which is not expressly derived from it.*

"IV. Political Liberty consists in the power of doing whatever does not injure another. The exercise of the natural rights of every man, has no other limits than those which are necessary to secure to every *other* man the free exercise of the same rights; and these limits are determinable only by the law.

"V. The law ought to prohibit only actions hurtful to society. What is not prohibited by the law, should not be hindered; nor should any one be compelled to that which the law does not require.

"VI. The law is an expression of the will of the community. All citizens have a right to concur, either personally, or by their representatives, in its formation. It should be the same to all, whether it protects or punishes; and *all being equal in its sight, are equally eligible to all honors, places, and employments, according to their different abilities, without any other distinction than that created by their virtues and talents.*

"VII. No man should be accused, arrested, or held in confinement, except in cases determined by the law, and according to the forms which it has prescribed. All who promote, solicit, execute, or cause to be executed, arbitrary orders, ought to be punished; and every citizen called upon or apprehended by virtue of the law, ought immediately to obey, and renders himself culpable by resistance.

"VIII. The law ought to impose no other penalties but such as are absolutely and evidently necessary: and no one ought to be punished, but in virtue of a law promulgated before the offence, and legally applied.

"IX. Every man being presumed innocent till he has been convicted, whenever his detention becomes indis-

pensible, all rigor to him, more than is necessary to secure his person, ought to be provided against by the law.

"X. No man ought to be molested on account of his opinions, not even on account of his *religious* opinions, provided his avowal of them does not disturb the public order established by the law.

"XI. The unrestrained communication of thoughts and opinions being one of the most precious rights of man, every citizen may speak, write, and publish freely, provided he is responsible for the abuse of this liberty in cases determined by the law.

"XII. A public force being necessary to give security to the rights of men and of citizens, that force is instituted for the benefit of the community, and not for the particular benefit of the persons with whom it is entrusted.

"XIII. A common contribution being necessary for the support of the public force, and for defraying the other expenses of government, it ought to be divided equally among the members of the community, according to their abilities.

"XIV. Every citizen has a right, either by himself or his representative, to a free voice in determining the necessity of public contributions, the appropriation of them, and their amount, mode of assessment and duration.

"XV. Every community has a right to demand of all its agents, an account of their conduct.

"XVI. Every community in which a separation of powers and a security of rights is not provided for, wants a constitution.

"XVII. The rights to property being inviolable and sacred, no one ought to be deprived of it, except in cases of evident public necessity, legally ascertained, and on condition of a previous just indemnity."

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.

THE three first articles comprehend in general terms the whole of a Declaration of Rights: All the succeeding articles either originate from them, or follow as elucidations. The fourth, fifth, and sixth define more particularly what is only generally expressed in the first, second, and third.

The seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh articles, are declaratory of *principles* upon which laws shall be constructed, conformable to *rights* already declared. But it is questioned by some very good people in France, as well as in other countries, whether the tenth article sufficiently guarantees the right it is intended to accord with: besides which, it takes off from the divine dignity of religion, and weakens its operative force upon the mind, to make it a subject of human laws. It then presents itself to Man, like light intercepted by a cloudy medium, in which the source of it is obscured from his sight, and he sees nothing to reverence in the dusky ray.*

* There is a single idea, which, if it strikes rightly upon the mind, either in a legal or a religious sense, will prevent any man, or any body of men, or any government, from going wrong on the subject of religion; which is, that before any human institutions of government were known in the world, there existed, if I may so express it, a compact between God and man, from the beginning of time; and that as the relation and condition which man in his *individual person* stands in towards his maker cannot be changed, or any ways altered by any human laws or human authority, that religious devotion, which is a part of this compact, cannot so much as be made a subject of human laws; and that all laws must conform themselves to this prior existing compact, and not assume to make the compact conform to the laws, which, besides being human, are subsequent thereto. The first act of man, when he looked around and saw himself a creature which he did not make, and a world furnished for his reception, must have been devotion; and devotion must ever continue sacred to every individual man, *as it appears right to him;* and governments do mischief by interfering.

The remaining articles, beginning with the twelfth, are substantially contained in the principles of the preceding articles; but, in the particular situation in which France then was, having to undo what was wrong, as well as to set up what was right, it was proper to be more particular than what in another condition of things would be necessary.

While the Declaration of Rights was before the National Assembly, some of its members remarked, that if a Declaration of Rights was published, it should be accompanied by a Declaration of Duties. The observation discovered a mind that reflected, and it only erred by not reflecting far enough. A Declaration of Rights is, by reciprocity, a Declaration of Duties also. Whatever is my right as a man, is also the right of another; and it becomes my duty to guarantee, as well as to possess.

The three first articles are the basis of Liberty, as well individual as national; nor can any country be called free, whose government does not take its beginning from the principles they contain, and continue to preserve them pure; and the whole of the Declaration of Rights is of more value to the world, and will do more good, than all the laws and statutes that have yet been promulgated.

In the declaratory exordium which prefaces the Declaration of Rights, we see the solemn and majestic spectacle of a Nation opening its commission, under the auspices of its Creator, to establish a Government; a scene so new, and so transcendantly unequalled by any thing in the European world, that the name of a Revolution is diminutive of its character, and it rises into a Regeneration of man. What are the present Governments of Europe, but a scene of iniquity and oppression? What is that of England? Do not its own inhabitants say, It is a market where every man has his price, and

where corruption is common traffic, at the expense of a deluded people? No wonder, then, that the French Revolution is traduced. Had it confined itself merely to the destruction of flagrant despotism, perhaps Mr. Burke and some others had been silent. Their cry now is, "It is gone to far:" that is, it has gone too far for them. It stares corruption in the face, and the venal tribe are all alarmed. Their fear discovers itself in their outrage, and they are but publishing the groans of a wounded vice. But from such opposition, the French Revolution, instead of suffering, receives an homage. The more it is struck, the more sparks it will emit; and the fear is, it will not be struck enough. It has nothing to dread from attacks: Truth has given it an establishment; and Time will record it with a name as lasting as his own.

Having now traced the progress of the French Revolution through most of its principal stages, from its commencement, to the taking of the Bastille, and its establishment by the Declaration of Rights, I will close the subject with the energetic apostrophe of M. de la Fayette—*May this great monument, raised to Liberty, serve as a lesson to the oppressor, and an example to the oppressed!**

* See p. 19 of this work.—N. B. Since the taking of the Bastille, the occurrences have been published; but the matters recorded in this narrative are prior to that period; and some of them, as may be easily seen, can be but very little known.

MISCELLANEOUS CHAPTER.

TO prevent interrupting the argument in the preceding part of this work, or the narrative that follows it, I reserved some observations to be thrown together into a Miscellaneous Chapter; by which variety might not be censured for confusion. Mr. Burke's book is *all* Miscellany. His intention was to make an attack on the French Revolution; but instead of proceeding with an orderly arrangement, he has stormed it with a mob of ideas tumbling over and destroying one another.

But this confusion and contradiction in Mr. Burke's book is easily accounted for. When a man in a long cause attempts to steer his course by any thing else than some polar truth or principle, he is sure to be lost. It is beyond the compass of his capacity to keep all the parts of an argument together, and make them unite in one issue, by any other means than having this guide always in view. Neither memory nor invention will supply the want of it. The former fails him, and the latter betrays him.

Notwithstanding the nonsense, for it deserves no better name, that Mr. Burke has asserted about hereditary rights, and hereditary succession, and that a Nation has not a right to form a Government for itself; it happened to fall in his way to give some account of what Government is. "*Government*," says he, "*is a contrivance of human wisdom.*"

Admitting that Government is a contrivance of human *wisdom*, it must necessarily follow, that hereditary succession, and hereditary rights (as they are called), can

make no part of it, because it is impossible to make wisdom hereditary; and on the other hand, *that* cannot be a wise contrivance, which in its operation may commit the government of a nation to the wisdom of an idiot. The ground which Mr. Burke now takes, is fatal to every part of his cause. The argument changes from hereditary rights to hereditary wisdom; and the question is, Who is the wisest man? He must now show that every one in the line of hereditary succession was a Solomon, or his title is not good to be a king. What a stroke has Mr. Burke now made! To use a sailor's phrase, he has *swabbed the deck*, and scarcely left a name legible in the list of Kings; and he has mowed down and thinned the House of Peers, with a scythe as formidable as Death and Time.

But Mr. Burke appears to have been aware of this retort, and he has taken care to guard against it, by making government to be not only the *contrivance* of human wisdom, but a *monopoly* of wisdom. He puts the nation as fools on one side, and places his government of wisdom, all wise men of Gotham, on the other side; and he then proclaims, and says, that "*men have a* RIGHT *that their* WANTS *should be provided for by this wisdom.*" Having thus made proclamation, he next proceeds to explain to them what their *wants* are, and also what their *rights* are. In this he has succeeded dexterously, for he makes their wants to be a *want* of wisdom; but as this is but cold comfort, he then informs them, that they have a *right* (not to any of the wisdom) but to be governed by it; and in order to impress them with a solemn reverence for this monopoly-government of wisdom, and of its vast capacity for all purposes, possible or impossible, right or wrong, he proceeds with astrological, mysterious importance, to tell them its powers in these words—"The Rights of Man in government are their advantages; and these are often in balances

between differences of good ; and in compromises sometimes between *good* and *evil*, and sometimes between *evil* and *evil*. Political reason is a *computing principle ;* adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing, morally and not metaphysically or mathematically, true moral demonstrations."

As the wondering audience whom Mr. Burke supposes himself talking to, may not understand all this learned jargon, I will undertake to be its interpreter. The meaning then, good people, of all this, is, *that government is governed by no principle whatever ; that it can make evil good, or good evil, just as it pleases. In short, that government is arbitrary power.*

But there are some things which Mr. Burke has forgotten. First, he has not shown where the wisdom originally came from ; and, secondly, he has not shown by what authority it first began to act. In the manner he introduces the matter, it is either government stealing wisdom, or wisdom stealing government. It is without an origin, and its powers without authority. In short, it is usurpation.

Whether it be from a sense of shame, or from a consciousness of some radical defect in a government necessary to be kept out of sight, or from both, or from some other cause, I undertake not to determine ; but so it is, that a monarchical reasoner never traces government to its source, or from its source. It is one of the *shibboleths* by which he may be known. A thousand years hence, those who shall live in America, or in France, will look back with contemplative pride on the origin of their governments, and say, *this was the work of our glorious ancestors !* But what can a monarchical talker say? What has he to exult in? Alas ! he has nothing. A certain something forbids him to look back to a beginning, lest some robber, or some Robin Hood, should rise from the long obscurity of time, and say, *I am the origin !*

Hard as Mr. Burke labored under the Regency Bill and Hereditary Succession two years ago, and much as he dived for precedents, he still had not boldness enough to bring up William of Normandy and say, *there is the head of the list! there is the fountain of honor!* the son of a prostitute, and the plunderer of the English nation.

The opinions of men, with respect to government, are changing fast in all countries. The revolutions of America and France have thrown a beam of light over the world, which reaches into man. The enormous expense of governments have provoked people to think by making them feel ; and when once the veil begins to rend, it admits not of repair. Ignorance is of a peculiar nature : once dispelled, it is impossible to re-establish it. It is not originally a thing of itself, but is only the absence of knowledge ; and though man may be *kept* ignorant, he cannot be *made* ignorant. The mind, in discovering truth, acts in the same manner as it acts through the eye in discovering objects ; when once any object has been seen, it is impossible to put the mind back to the same condition it was in before it saw it. Those who talk of a counter-revolution in France, show how little they understand of man. There does not exist in the compass of language, an arrangement of words to express so much as the means of effecting a counter-revolution. The means most be an obliteration of knowledge ; and it has never yet been discovered how to make a man *unknow* his knowledge, or *unthink* his thoughts.

Mr. Burke is laboring in vain to stop the progress of knowledge ; and it comes with the worse grace from him, as there is a certain transaction known in the city, which renders him suspected of being a pensioner in a fictitious name. This may account for some strange doctrine he has advanced in his book, which, though he points it at the Revolution Society, is effectually directed against the whole Nation.

"The King of England," says he, "holds *his* crown (for it does not belong to the nation, according to Mr. Burke) in *contempt* of the choice of the Revolution Society, who have not a single vote for a King among them either *individually* or *collectively;* and his majesty's heirs, each in their time and order, will come to the crown *with the same contempt* of their choice, with which his majesty has succeeded to that which he now wears."

As to who is King of England or elsewhere, or whether there is any at all, or whether the people choose a Cherokee Chief, or a Hessian Hussar for a King, is not a matter that I trouble myself about,—be that to themselves; but with respect to the doctrine, so far it relates to the Rights of Men and Nations, it is as abominable as any thing ever uttered in the most enslaved country under heaven. Whether it sounds worse to my ear, by not being accustomed to hear such despotism, than it does to the ear of another person, I am not so well a judge of; but of its abominable principle, I am at no loss to judge.

It is not the Revolution Society that Mr. Burke means; it is the Nation, as well in its *original*, as in its *representative* character; and he has taken care to make himself understood, by saying, that they have not a vote either *collectively* or *individually*. The Revolution Society is composed of citizens of all denominations, and of Members of both Houses of Parliament; and consequently, if there is not a right to a vote in any of the characters, there can be no right to any, either in the nation or in its parliament. This ought to be a caution to every country, how it imports foreign families to be kings. It is somewhat curious to observe, that although the people of England have been in the habit of talking about kings, it is always a foreign house of kings; hating foreigners, yet governed by them. It is now the House of Brunswick, one of the petty tribes of Germany.

It has hitherto been the practice of the English Parlia-

ments, to regulate what was called the succession, (taking it for granted, that the nation then continued to accord to the form of annexing a monarchical branch to its government; for without this, the Parliament could not have had the authority to have sent either to Holland or to Hanover, or to impose a king upon a nation against its will.) And this must be the utmost limit to which Parliament can go upon the case; but the right of the Nation goes to the *whole* case, because it has the right of changing its *whole* form of government. The right of a Parliament is only a right in trust, a right by delegation, and that but of a very small part of the Nation; and one of its Houses has not even this. But the right of the Nation is an original right, as universal as taxation. The Nation is the paymaster of every thing, and every thing must conform to its general will.

I remember taking notice of a speech in what is called the English House of Peers, by the then Earl of Shelburne, and I think it was at the time he was Minister, which is applicable to this case. I do not directly charge my memory with every particular; but the words and the purport, as nearly as I remember, were these: *That the form of a Government was a matter wholly at the will of a Nation, at all times: that if it chose a monarchial form, it had a right to have it so; and if it afterwards chose to be a Republic, it had a right to be a Republic, and to say to a King, "We have no longer any occasion for you."*

When Mr. Burke says that "His Majesty's heirs and successors, each in their time and order, will come to the crown with the *same contempt* of their choice with which His Majesty has succeeded to that he wears," it is saying too much even to the humblest individual in the country; part of whose daily labor goes towards making up the million sterling a year, which the country gives the person it styles a King. Government with insolence

is despotism; but when contempt is added, it becomes worse; and to pay for contempt, is the excess of slavery. This species of government comes from Germany; and reminds me of what one of the Brunswick soldiers told me, who was taken prisoner by the Americans in the late war. "Ah!" said he, "America is a fine free country; it is worth the people's fighting for; I know the difference by knowing my own: in my country, if the prince says, Eat straw, we eat straw." God help that country, thought I, be it England or elsewhere, whose liberties are to be protected by German principles of government, and Princes of Brunswick.

As Mr. Burke sometimes speaks of England, sometimes of France, and sometimes of the world, and of government in general, it is difficult to answer his book without apparently meeting him on the same ground. Although principles of Government are general subjects, it is next to impossible in many cases to separate them from the idea of place and circumstance; and the more so when circumstances are put for arguments, which is frequently the case with Mr. Burke.

In the former part of his book, addressing himself to the people of France, he says, "No experience has taught us, (meaning the English), that in any other course or method than that of an *hereditary crown*, can our liberties be regularly perpetuated and preserved sacred as our *hereditary right*." I ask Mr. Burke, who is to take them away? M. de la Fayette, in speaking to France says, "*For a Nation to be free, it is sufficient that she wills it.*" But Mr. Burke represents England as wanting capacity to take care of itself, and that its liberties must be taken care of by a King holding it in "contempt." If England is sunk to this, it is preparing itself to eat straw, as in Hanover or in Brunswick. But besides the folly of the declaration, it happens that the facts are all against Mr. Burke. It was by the Government *being hereditary*,

that the liberties of the people were endangered. Charles I. and James II. are instances of this truth; yet neither of them went so far as to hold the Nation in contempt.

As it is sometimes of advantage to the people of one country, to hear what those of other countries have to say respecting it, it is possible that the people of France may learn something from Mr. Burke's book, and that the people of England may also learn something from the answers it will occasion. When Nations fall out about freedom, a wide field of debate is opened. The argument commences with the rights of war, without its evils; and as knowledge is the object contended for, the party that sustains the defeat obtains the prize.

Mr. Burke talks about what he calls an hereditary crown, as if it were some production of Nature; or as if, like Time, it had a power to operate, not only independently, but in spite of man; or as if it were a thing or a subject universally consented to. Alas! it has none of those properties, but is the reverse of them all. It is a thing in imagination, the propriety of which is more than doubted, and the legality of which in a few years will be denied.

But, to arrange this matter in a clearer view than what general expressions can convey, it will be necessary to state the distinct heads under which (what is called) an hereditary crown, or, more properly speaking, an hereditary succession to the Government of a Nation, can be considered; which are,

First, The right of a particular Family to establish itself.

Secondly, The right of a Nation to establish a particular Family.

With respect to the *first* of these heads, that of a Family establishing itself with hereditary powers on its own authority, and independent of the consent of a Nation, all men will concur in calling it despotism; and

it would be trespassing on their understanding to attempt to prove it.

But the *second* head, that of a Nation establishing a particular Family with *hereditary powers*, does not present itself as despotism on the first reflection ; but if men will permit a second reflection to take place, and carry that reflection forward but one remove out of their own persons to that of their offspring, they will then see that hereditary succession becomes in its consequences the same despotism to others, which they reprobated for themselves. It operates to preclude the consent of the succeeding generations ; and the preclusion of consent is despotism. When the person who at any time shall be in possession of a Government, or those who stand in succession to him, shall say to a Nation, I hold this power in "contempt" of you, it signifies not on what authority he pretends to say it. It is no relief, but an aggravation to a person in slavery, to reflect that he was sold by his parent ; and as that which heightens the criminality of an act cannot be produced to prove the legality of it, hereditary succession cannot be established as a legal thing.

In order to arrive to a more perfect decision on this head, it will be proper to consider the generation which undertakes to establish a Family with *hereditary powers*, apart and separate from the generations which are to follow ; and also to consider the character in which the *first* generation acts with respect to succeeding generations.

The generation which first selects a person, and puts him at the head of its Government, either with the title of King, or any other distinction, acts its *own choice*, be it wise or foolish, as a free agent for itself. The person so set up is not hereditary, but selected and appointed ; and the generation who sets him up, does not live under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice and establishment. Were the generation who sets him up, and the person so set up, to live for

ever, it never could become hereditary succession; and of consequence, hereditary succession can only follow on the death of the first parties.

As therefore hereditary succession is out of the question with respect to the *first* generation, we have now to consider the character in which *that* generation acts with respect to the commencing generation, and to all succeeding ones.

It assumes a character, to which it has neither right nor title. It changes itself from a *Legislator* to a *Testator*, and affects to make its Will, which is to have operation after the demise of the makers, to bequeath the Government; and it not only attempts to bequeath, but to establish on the succeeding generation, a new and different form of government under which itself lived. Itself, as is already observed, lived not under an hereditary Government, but under a Government of its own choice and establishment; and it now attempts, by virtue of a will and testament, (which it has not authority to make), to take from the commencing generation, and all future ones, the rights and free agency by which itself acted.

But, exclusive of the right which any generation has to act collectively as a testator, the objects to which it applies itself in this case, are not within the compass of any law, or of any will or testament.

The rights of men in society, are neither devisable, nor transferable, nor annihilable, but are descendible only; and it is not in the power of any generation to intercept finally, and cut off the descent. If the present generation, or any other, are disposed to be slaves, it does not lessen the right of the succeeding generation to be free: wrongs cannot have a legal descent. When Mr. Burke attempts to maintain, that the *English Nation did at the Revolution of 1688, most solemnly renounce and abdicate their rights for themselves, and for all their pos-*

terity for ever; he speaks a language that merits not reply, and which can only exite contempt for his prostitute principles, or pity for his ignorance.

In whatever light hereditary succession, as growing out of the will and testament of some former generation, presents itself, it is an absurdity. A cannot make a will to take from B the property of B, and give it to C; yet this is the manner in which (what is called) hereditary succession by law operates. A certain former generation made a will, to take away the rights of the commencing generation, and all future ones, and convey those rights to a third person, who afterwards comes forward, and tells them, in Mr. Burke's language, that they have *no rights*, that their rights are already bequeathed to him, and that he will govern in *contempt* of them. From such principles, and such ignorance, Good Lord deliver the world!

But, after all, what is this metaphor, called a crown, or rather what is monarchy? Is it a thing, or is it a name, or is it a fraud? Is it a "contrivance of human wisdom," or human craft, to obtain money from a nation under specious pretences? Is it a thing necessary to a nation? If it is, in what does that necessity consist, what services does it perform, what is its business, and what are its merits? Doth the virtue consist in the metaphor, or in the man? Doth the goldsmith that makes the crown, make the virtue also? Doth it operate like Fortunatus's wishing cap or Harlequin's wooden sword? Doth it make a man a conjuror? In fine, what is it? It appears to be a something going much out of fashion, falling into ridicule, and rejected in some countries both as unnecessary and expensive. In America it is considered as an absurdity, and in France it has so far declined, that the goodness of the man, and the respect for his personal character are the only things that preserve the appearance of its existence.

If Government be what Mr. Burke describes it, "a contrivance of human wisdom," I might ask him, if wisdom was at such a low ebb in England, that is was become necessary to import it from Holland and from Hanover? But I will do the country the justice to say, that was not the case; and even if it was, it mistook the cargo. The wisdom of every country, when properly exerted, is sufficient for all its purposes: and there could exist no more real occasion in England to have sent for a Dutch Stadtholder, or a German Elector, than there was in America to have done a similar thing. If a country does not understand its own affairs, how is a foreigner to understand them, who knows neither its laws, its manners, nor its language? If there existed a man so transcendently wise above all others, that his wisdom was necessary to instruct a nation, some reason might be offered for monarchy; but when we cast our eyes about a country, and observe how every part understands its own affairs; and when we look around the world, and see that of all men in it, the race of kings are the most insignificant in capacity, our reason cannot fail to ask us—What are those men kept for?

If there is any thing in monarchy which we people of America do not understand, I wish Mr. Burke would be so kind as to inform us. I see in America, a government extending over a country ten times as large as England, and conducted with regularity for a fortieth part of the expense which government costs in England. If I ask a man in America, if he wants a King, he retorts, and asks me if I take him for an idiot. How is it that this difference happens? Are we more or less wise than others? I see in America, the generality of the people living in a style of plenty unknown in monarchical countries; and I see that the principle of its government, which is that of the *equal Rights of Man*, is making a rapid progress in the world.

If monarchy is a useless thing, why is it kept up any where? and if a necessary thing, how can it be dispensed with? That *civil government* is necessary, all civilized nations will agree; but civil government is republican government. All that part of the government of England which begins with the office of constable, and proceeds through the department of magistrate, quarter-session, and general assize, including the trial by jury, is republican government. Nothing of monarchy appears in any part of it, except the name which William the Conqueror imposed upon the English, that of obliging them to call him "their Sovereign Lord the King.

It is easy to conceive, that a band of interested men, such as Placemen, Pensioners, Lords of the bed-chamber, Lords of the kitchen, Lords of the necessary-house, and the Lord knows what besides, can find as many reasons for monarchy as their salaries, paid at the expense of the country, amount to; but if I ask the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradesman, and down through all the occupations of life to the common laborer, what service monarchy is to him? He can give me no answer. If I ask him what monarchy is, he believes it is something like a sinecure.

Notwithstanding the taxes of England amount to almost seventeen millions a year, said to be for the expenses of Government, it is still evident that the sense of the Nation is left to govern itself, and does govern itself by magistrates and juries, almost at its own charge, on republican principles, exclusive of the expense of taxes. The salaries of the Judges are almost the only charge that is paid out of the revenue. Considering that all the internal Government is executed by the people, the taxes of England ought to be the lightest of any nation in Europe; instead of which, they are the contrary. As this cannot be accounted for on the score of civil government,

the subject necessarily extends itself to the monarchical part.

When the people of England sent for George I. (and it would puzzle a wiser man than Mr. Burke to discover for what he could be wanted or what service he could render), they ought at least to have conditioned for the abandonment of Hanover. Besides the endless German intrigues that must follow from a German Elector being King of England, there is a natural impossibility of uniting in the same person the principles of Freedom and the principles of Despotism, or, as it is usually called in England, Arbitrary power. A German Elector is, in his electorate, a despot: how then could it be expected that he should be attached to principles of liberty in one country, while his interest in another was to be supported by despotism? The union cannot exist; and it might easily have been foreseen, that German Electors would make German Kings, or, in Mr. Burke's words, would assume government with "contempt." The English have been in the habit of considering a King of England only in the character in which he appears to them; whereas the same person, while the connection lasts, has a home-seat in another country, the interest of which is different to their own, and the principles of the governments in opposition to each other. To such a person England will appear as a town-residence, and the Electorate as the estate. The English may wish, as I believe they do, success to the principles of Liberty in France, or in Germany; but a German Elector trembles for the fate of despotism in his electorate; and the Duchy of Mecklenburg, where the present Queen's family governs, is under the same wretched state of arbitrary power, and the people in slavish vassalage.

There never was a time when it became the English to watch continental intrigues more circumspectly than at the present moment, and to distinguish the politics of

the Electorate from the politics of the Nation. The Revolution of France has entirely changed the ground with respect to England and France, as nations: but the German despots, with Prussia at their head, are combining against Liberty; and the fondness of Mr. Pitt for office, and the interest which all his family connections have obtained, do not give sufficient security against this intrigue.

As every thing which passes in the world becomes matter for history, I will now quit this subject, and take a concise review of the state of parties and politics in England, as Mr. Burke has done in France.

Whether the present reign commenced with contempt, I leave to Mr. Burke: certain however it is, that it had strongly that appearance. The animosity of the English Nation, it is very well remembered, ran high; and, had the true principles of Liberty been as well understood then as they now promise to be, it is probable the Nation would not have patiently submitted to so much. George the First and the Second were sensible of a rival in the remains of the Stuarts; and as they could not but consider themselves as standing on their good behavior, they had prudence to keep their German principles of Government to themselves; but as the Stuart family wore away, the prudence became less necessary.

The contest between rights, and what were called prerogatives, continued to heat the Nation till some time after the conclusion of the American War, when all at once it fell calm; execration exchanged itself for applause, and Court popularity sprung up like a mushroom in a night.

To account for this sudden transition, it is proper to observe, that there are two distinct species of popularity; the one excited by merit, the other by resentment. As the Nation had formed itself into two parties, and each was extolling the merits of its parliamentary champions

for and against prerogative, nothing could operate to give a more general shock than an immediate coalition of the champions themselves. The partisans of each being thus suddenly left in the lurch, and mutually heated with disgust at the measure, felt no other relief than uniting in a common execration against both. A higher stimulus of resentment being thus excited, than what the contest of prerogatives had occasioned, the Nation quitted all former objects of rights and wrongs, and sought only that of gratification. The indignation at the Coalition, so effectually superseded the indignation against the Court, as to extinguish it; and without any change of principles on the part of the Court, the same people who had reprobated its despotism, united with it, to revenge themselves on the Coalition Parliament. The case was not, which they liked best,—but, which they hated most; and the least hated passed for love. The dissolution of the Coalition Parliament, as it afforded the means of gratifying the resentment of the Nation, could not fail to be popular; and from hence arose the popularity of the Court.

Transitions of this kind exhibit a Nation under the government of temper, instead of a fixed and steady principle, and having once committed itself, however rashly, it feels itself urged along to justify by continuance its first proceeding. Measures which at other times it would censure, it now approves, and acts persuasion upon itself to suffocate its judgment.

On the return of a new Parliament, the new Minister, Mr. Pitt, found himself in a secure majority: and the nation gave him credit, not out of regard to himself, but because it had resolved to do it out of resentment to another. He introduced himself to public notice by a proposed Reform of Parliament, which in its operation would have amounted to a public justification of corruption. The Nation was to be at the expense of buying up

the rotten boroughs, whereas it ought to punish the persons who deal in the traffic.

Passing over the two bubbles, of the Dutch business, and the million a year to sink the national debt, the matter which most presents itself, is the affair of the Regency. Never, in the course of my observation, was delusion more successfully acted, nor a nation more completely deceived. But, to make this appear, it will be necessary to go over the circumstances.

Mr. Fox had stated in the House of Commons, that the Prince of Wales, as heir in succession, had a right in himself to assume the government. This was opposed by Mr. Pitt; and, so far as the opposition was confined to the doctrine, it was just. But the principles which Mr. Pitt maintained on the contrary side, were as bad, or worse in their extent, than those of Mr. Fox; because they went to establish an aristocracy over the Nation, and over the small representation it has in the House of Commons.

Whether the English form of Government be good or bad, is not in this case the question; but, taking it as it stands, without regard to its merits or demerits, Mr. Pitt was farther from the point than Mr. Fox.

It is supposed to consist of three parts; while, therefore, the Nation is disposed to continue this form, the parts have a *national standing*, independent of each other, and are not the creatures of each other. Had Mr. Fox passed through Parliament, and said that the person alluded to claimed on the ground of the Nation, Mr. Pitt must then have contended (what he called) the right of the Parliament, against the right of the Nation.

By the appearance which the contest made, Mr. Fox took the hereditary ground, and Mr. Pitt the parliamentary ground; but the fact is, they both took hereditary ground, and Mr. Pitt took the worst of the two.

What is called the Parliament, is made up of two

Houses; one of which is more hereditary, and more beyond the control of the Nation, than what the Crown (as it is called) is supposed to be. It is an hereditary aristocracy, assuming and asserting indefeasible, irrevocable rights and authority, wholly independent of the Nation. Where then was the merited popularity of exalting this hereditary power over another hereditary power less independent of the Nation than what itself assumed to be, and of absorbing the rights of the Nation into a House over which it has neither election nor control?

The general impulse of the Nation was right; but it acted without reflection. It approved the opposition made to the right set up by Mr. Fox, without perceiving that Mr. Pitt was supporting another indefeasible right, more remote from the Nation, in opposition to it.

With respect to the House of Commons, it is elected but by a small part of the Nation; but were the election as universal as taxation, which it ought to be, it would still be only the organ of the Nation, and cannot possess inherent rights. When the National Assembly of France resolves a matter, the resolve is made in right of the Nation; but Mr. Pitt, on all national questions, so far as they refer to the House of Commons, absorbs the rights of the Nation into the organ, and makes the organ into a Nation, and the Nation itself into a cypher.

In a few words, the question on the Regency was a question on a million a year, which is appropriated to the executive department; and Mr. Pitt could not possess himself of any management of this sum, without setting up the supremacy of Parliament; and when this was accomplished, it was indifferent who should be Regent, as he must be Regent at his own cost. Among the curiosities which this contentious debate afforded, was that of making the Great Seal into a King; the affixing of which to an act, was to be royal authority. If, therefore,

Royal Authority is a Great Seal, it consequently is in itself nothing; and a good Constitution would be of infinitely more value to the Nation, than what the three Nominal Powers, as they now stand, are worth.

The continual use of the word *Constitution* in the English Parliament, shows there is none; and that the whole is merely a form of Government without a Constitution, and constituting itself with what power it pleases. If there were a Constitution, it certainly could be referred to; and the debate on any constitutional point, would terminate by producing the Constitution. One member says, "this is Constitution;" and another says, "that is Constitution." To-day it is one thing; and to-morrow, it is something else—while the maintaining the debate proves there is none. Constitution is now the cant word of Parliament, tuning itself to the ear of the Nation. Formerly it was the *universal supremacy of Parliament*—the *omnipotence of Parliament.* But since the progress of Liberty in France, those phrases have a despotic harshness in their note; and the English Parliament has caught the fashion from the National Assembly, but without the substance, of speaking of a *Constitution.*

As the present generation of people in England did not make the Government, they are not accountable for its defects; but that sooner or later it must come into their hands to undergo a national reformation, is as certain as that the same thing has happened in France. If France, with a revenue of nearly twenty-four millions sterling, with an extent of rich and fertile country above four times larger than England, with a population of twenty-four millions of inhabitants to support taxation, with upwards of ninety millions sterling of gold and silver circulating in the nation, and with a debt less than the present debt of England—still found it necessary, from whatever cause, to come to a settlement of its affairs, it solves the problem of funding for both countries.

It is out of the question to say how long what is called the English constitution has lasted, and to argue from thence how long it is to last; the question is, how long can the funding system last? It is a thing but of modern invention, and has not yet continued beyond the life of a man; yet in that short space it has so far accumulated, that, together with the current expenses, it requires an amount of taxes at least equal to the whole landed rental of the nation in acres, to defray the annual expenditure. That a government could not always have gone on by the same system which has been followed for the last seventy years, must be evident to every man; and for the same reason it cannot always go on.

The funding system is not money; neither is it, properly speaking, credit. It in effect creates upon paper the sum which it appears to borrow, and lays on a tax to keep the imaginary capital alive by the payment of interest, and sends the annuity to market, to be sold for paper already in circulation. If any credit is given, it is to the disposition of the people to pay the tax, and not to the government which lays it on. When this disposition expires, what is supposed to be the credit of Government expires with it. The instance of France under the former Government, shows that it is impossible to compel the payment of taxes by force, when a whole nation is determined to take its stand upon that ground.

Mr. Burke, in his review of the finances of France, states the quantity of gold and silver in France, at about eighty-eight millions sterling. In doing this, he has, I presume, divided by the difference of exchange, instead of the standard of twenty-four livres to a pound sterling; for M. Necker's statement, from which Mr. Burke's is taken, is *two thousand two hundred millions of livres*, which is upwards of ninety-one millions and a half sterling.

M. Necker in France, and Mr. George Chalmers of the

Office of Trade and Plantation in England, of which Lord Hawkesbury is president, published nearly about the same time (1786) an account of the quantity of money in each nation, from the returns of the Mint of each nation. Mr. Chalmers, from the returns of the English Mint at the Tower of London, states the quantity of money in England, including Scotland and Ireland, to be twenty millions sterling.*

M. Necker† says, that the amount of money in France, recoined from the old coin which was called in, was two thousand and five hundred millions of livres, (upwards of one hundred and four millions sterling); and, after deducting for waste, and what may be in the West Indies, and other possible circumstances, states the circulation quantity at home, to be ninety-one millions and a half sterling; but, taking it as Mr. Burke has put it, it is sixty-eight millions more than the national quantity in England.

That the quantity of money in France cannot be under this sum, may at once be seen from the state of the French revenue, without referring to the records of the French Mint for proofs. The revenue of France prior to the Revolution, was nearly twenty-four millions sterling; and as paper had then no existence in France, the whole revenue was collected upon gold and silver; and it would have been impossible to have collected such a quantity of revenue upon a less national quantity than M. Necker has stated. Before the establishment of paper in England, the revenue was about a fourth part of the national amount of gold and silver, as may be known by referring to the revenue prior to King William, and the quantity of money stated to be in the nation at that time, which was nearly as much as it is now.

It can be of no real service to a Nation, to impose upon itself, or to permit itself to be imposed upon; but the

* See *Estimate of the Comparative Strength of Great Britain*, by G. Chalmers.
† See *Administration of the Finances of France*, Vol. III. by M. Necker.

prejudices of some, and the imposition of others, have always represented France as a nation possessing but little money, whereas the quantity is not only more than four times what the quantity is in England, but is considerably greater on a proportion of numbers. To account for this deficiency on the part of England, some reference should be had to the English system of funding. It operates to multiply papers and to substitute it in the room of money, in various shapes; and the more paper is multiplied, the more opportunities are afforded to export the specie; and it admits of a possibility (by extending it to small notes) of increasing paper till there is no money left.

I know this is not a pleasant subject to English readers; but the matters I am going to mention, are so important in themselves, as to require the attention of men interested in money-transactions of a public nature. There is a circumstance stated by M. Necker, in his treatise on the administration of the finances, which has never been attended to in England, but which forms the only basis whereon to estimate the quantity of money (gold and silver) which ought to be in every nation in Europe, to preserve a relative proportion with other nations.

Lisbon and Cadiz are the two ports into which (money) gold and silver from South America are imported, and which afterwards divides and spreads itself over Europe by means of commerce, and increases the quantity of money in all parts of Europe. If, therefore, the amount of the annual importation into Europe can be known, and the relative proportion of the foreign commerce of the several nations by which it is distributed can be ascertained, they give a rule, sufficiently true, to ascertain the quantity of money which ought to be found in any nation, at any given time.

M. Necker shows from the registers of Lisbon and

Cadiz, that the importation of gold and silver into Europe, is five millions sterling annually. He has not taken it on a single year, but on an average of fifteen succeeding years, from 1763 to 1777, both inclusive; in which time, the amount was one thousand eight hundred million livres, in which is seventy-five millions sterling.*

From the commencement of the Hanover succession in 1714, to the time Mr. Chalmers published, is seventy-two years; and the quantity imported into Europe, in that time, would be three hundred and sixty millions sterling.

If the foreign commerce of Great Britain be stated at a sixth part of what the whole foreign commerce of Europe amounts to, (which is probably an inferior estimation to what the gentlemen at the Exchange would allow), the proportion which Britian should draw by commerce of this sum, to keep herself on a proportion with the rest of Europe, would be also a sixth part, which is sixty millions sterling; and if the same allowance for waste and accident be made for England which M. Necker makes for France, the quantity remaining after these deductions would be fifty-two millions; and this sum ought to have been in the nation (at the time Mr. Chalmers published) in addition to the sum which was in the nation at the commencement of the Hanover succession, and to have made in the whole at least sixty-six millions sterling; instead of which, there were but twenty millions, which is forty-six millions below its proportionate quantity.

As the quantity of gold and silver imported into Lisbon and Cadiz is more exactly ascertained than that of any commodity imported into England, and as the quantity of money coined at the Tower of London is still more positively known, the leading facts do not admit of controversy. Either, therefore, the commerce of England is unproductive of profit, or the gold and silver which it

* *Administration of the Finances of France*, Vol. III.

brings in, leak continually away by unseen means, at the average rate of about three-quarters of a million a year, which, in the course of seventy-two years, accounts for the deficiency ; and its absence is supplied by paper.*

The Revolution of France is attended with many novel circumstances, not only in the political sphere, but in the circle of money transactions. Among others, it shows that a government may be in a state of insolvency, and a Nation rich. So far as the fact is confined to the late Government of France, it was insolvent; because the nation would no longer support its extravagance, and therefore it could no longer support itself; but with respect to the Nation, all the means existed. A Government may be said to be insolvent, every time it applies to a Nation to discharge its arrears. The insol-

* Whether the English commerce does not bring in money, or whether the Government sends it out after it is brought in, is a matter which the parties concerned can best explain ; but that the deficiency exists, is not in the power of either to disprove. While Dr. Price, Mr. Eden (now Auckland), Mr. Chalmers, and others, were debating whether the quantity of money was greater or less than at the Revolution, the circumstance was not adverted to, that since the Revolution, there cannot have been less than four hundred millions sterling imported into Europe ; and therefore, the quantity in England ought at least to have been four times greater than it was at the Revolution, to be on a proportion with Europe. What England is now doing by paper, is what she should have been able to do by solid money, if gold and silver had come into the nation in the proportion it ought, or had not been sent out; and she is endeavoring to restore by paper, the balance she has lost by money. It is certain, that the gold and silver which arrive annually in the register-ships to Spain and Portugal, do not remain in those countries. Taking the value half in gold and half in silver, it is about four hundred tons annually ; and from the number of ships and galloons employed in the trade of bringing those metals from South America to Portugal and Spain, the quantity sufficiently proves itself, without referring to the registers.

In the situation England now is, it is impossible she can increase in money. High taxes not only lessen the property of the individuals, but they lessen also the money-capital of a nation, by inducing smuggling, which can only be carried on by gold and silver. By the politics which the British Government have carried on with the inland powers of Germany and the continent, it has made an enemy of all the maritime powers, and is therefore obliged to keep up a large navy ; but though the navy is built in England, the naval stores must be purchased from abroad, and that from countries where the greatest part must be paid for in gold and silver. Some fallacious rumors have been set afloat in England to induce a belief of money, and, among others, that of the French refugees bringing great quantities. The idea is ridiculous. The general part of the money in France is silver ; and it would take upward of twenty of the largest broad wheel wagons, with ten horses each, to remove one million sterling of silver. Is it then to be supposed, that a few people fleeing on horseback, or in post-chaises, in a secret manner, and having the French Custom House to pass, and the sea to cross, could bring even a sufficiency for their own expenses?

When millions of money are spoken of, it should be recollected, that such sums can only accumulate in a country by slow degrees, and a long procession of time. The most frugal system that England could now adopt, would not recover, in a century, the balance she has lost in money since the commencement of the Hanover succession. She is seventy millions behind France, and she must be in some considerable proportion behind every country in Europe, because the returns of the English Mint do not show an increase of money, while the registers of Lisbon and Cadiz show an European increase of between three and four hundred millions sterling.

vency of the late Government of France, and the present Government of England, differed in no other respect than as the disposition of the people differ. The people of France refused their aid to the old Government; and the people of England submit to taxation without enquiry. What is called the Crown in England, has been insolvent several times; the last of which, publicly known, was in May 1777, when it applied to the Nation to discharge upwards of £600,000, private debts, which otherwise it could not pay.

It was the error of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Burke, and all those who were unacquainted with the affairs of France, to confound the French Nation with the French Government. The French Nation, in effect, endeavored to render the late Government insolvent, for the purpose of taking Government into its own hands; and it reserved its means for the support of the new Government. In a country of such vast extent and population as France, the natural means cannot be wanting; and the political means appear the instant the Nation is disposed to permit them. When Mr. Burke, in a speech last Winter in the British Parliament, *cast his eyes over the map of Europe, and saw the chasm that once was France*, he talked like a dreamer of dreams. The same natural France existed as before, and all the natural means existed with it. The only chasm was that which the extinction of despotism had left, and which was to be filled up with a constitution more formidable in resources than the power which had expired.

Although the French Nation rendered the late Government insolvent, it did not permit the insolvency to act towards the creditors; and the creditors considering the Nation as the real paymaster, and the Government only as the agent, rested themselves on the Nation, in preference to the Government. This appears greatly to disturb Mr. Burke, as the precedent is fatal to the policy

by which Governments have supposed themselves secure. They have contracted debts, with a view of attaching what is called the monied interest of a Nation to their support; but the example in France shows, that the permanent security of the creditor is in the Nation, and not in the Government; and that in all possible revolutions that may happen in Governments, the means are always with the Nation, and the Nation always in existence. Mr. Burke argues, that the creditors ought to have abided the fate of the Government which they trusted; but the National Assembly considered them as the creditors of the Nation, and not of the Government—of the master, and not of the steward.

Notwithstanding the late Government could not discharge the current expenses, the present Government has paid off a great part of the capital. This has been accomplished by two means; the one by lessening the expenses of Government, and the other by the sale of the monastic and ecclesiastical landed estates. The devotees and penitent debauchees, extortioners and misers of former days, to ensure themselves a better world than that which they were about to leave, had bequeathed immense property in trust to the priesthood, for *pious uses;* and the priesthood kept it for themselves. The National Assembly has ordered it to be sold for the good of the whole Nation, and the priesthood to be decently provided for.

In consequence of the Revolution, the annual interest of the debt of France will be reduced at least six millions sterling, by paying off upwards of one hundred millions of the capital; which, with lessening the former expenses of Government at least three millions, will place France in a situation worthy the imitation of Europe.

Upon a whole review of the subject, how vast is the contrast? While Mr. Burke has been talking of a general bankruptcy in France, the National Assembly

has been paying off the capital of its debt; and while taxes have increased near a million a year in England, they have lowered several millions a year in France. Not a word has either Mr. Burke or Mr. Pitt said about French affairs, or the state of the French finances, in the present Session of Parliament. The subject begins to be too well understood, and imposition serves no longer.

There is a general enigma running through the whole of Mr. Burke's book. He writes in a rage against the National Assembly; but what is he enraged about? If his assertions were as true as they are groundless, and that France, by her Revolution, had annihilated her power, and become what he calls a *chasm*, it might excite the grief of a Frenchman (considering himself as a national man), and provoke his rage against the National Assembly; but why should it excite the rage of Mr. Burke? Alas! it is not the Nation of France that Mr. Burke means, but the *Court;* and every Court in Europe, dreading the same fate, is in mourning. He writes neither in the character of a Frenchman nor an Englishman, but in the fawning character of that creature known in all countries, and a friend to none, a *Courtier.* Whether it be the Court of Versailles, or the Court of St. James or Carlton-House, or the Court in expectation, signifies not; for the caterpillar principles of all Courts and Courtiers are alike. They form a common policy throughout Europe, detached and separate from the interest of Nations: and while they appear to quarrel, they agree to plunder. Nothing can be more terrible to a Court or a Courtier, than the Revolution of France. That which is a blessing to Nations, is bitterness to them; and as their existence depends on the duplicity of a country, they tremble at the approach of principles, and dread the precedent that threatens their overthrow.

CONCLUSION.

REASON and Ignorance, the opposites of each other, influence the great bulk of mankind. If either of these can be rendered sufficiently extensive in a country, the machinery of Government goes easily on. Reason obeys itself; and Ignorance submits to whatever is dictated to it.

The two modes of Government which prevail in the world, are, *first*, Government by election and representation: *Secondly*, Government by hereditary succession. The former is generally known by the name of republic; the latter by that of monarchy and aristocracy.

Those two distinct and opposite forms, erect themselves on the two distinct and opposite bases of Reason and Ignorance. As the exercise of Government requires talents and abilities, and as talents and abilities cannot have hereditary descent, it is evident that hereditary succession requires a belief from man, to which his reason cannot subscribe, and which can only be established upon his ignorance; and the more ignorant any country is, the better it is fitted for this species of Government.

On the contrary, Government in a well constituted republic, requires no belief from man beyond what his reason can give. He sees the *rationale* of the whole system, its origin and its operation; and as it is best supported when best understood, the human faculties act with boldness, and acquire, under this form of Government, a gigantic manliness.

As, therefore, each of those forms acts on a different base, the one moving freely by the aid of reason, the other by ignorance; we have next to consider, what it is that gives motion to that species of Government which is called mixed Government, or, as it is sometimes ludicrously styled, a Government of *this*, *that*, and *t'other*.

The moving power in this species of Government, is of necessity, Corruption. However imperfect election and representation may be in mixed Governments, they still give exercise to a greater portion of reason than is convenient to the hereditary part; and therefore it becomes necessary to buy the reason up. A mixed Government is an imperfect everything, cementing and soldering the discordant parts together by corruption, to act as a whole. Mr. Burke appears highly disgusted, that France, since she had resolved on a revolution, did not adopt what he calls, "*A British Constitution*," and the regretful manner in which he expresses himself on this occasion, implies a suspicion, that the British Constitution needed something to keep its defects in countenance.

In mixed Governments there is no responsibility: the parts cover each other till responsibility is lost; and the corruption which moves the machine, contrives at the same time its own escape. When it is laid down as a maxim, that *a King can do no wrong*, it places him in a state of similar security with that of idiots and persons insane, and responsibility is out of the question with respect to himself. It then descends upon the Minister, who shelters himself under a majority in Parliament, which, by places, pensions, and corruption, he can always command; and that majority justifies itself by the same authority with which it protects the Minister. In this rotatory motion, responsibility is thrown off from the parts, and from the whole.

When there is a part in a Government which can do no wrong, it implies that it does nothing; and is only the machine of another power, by whose advice and direction in acts. What is supposed to be the King in mixed Governments is the Cabinet; and as the Cabinet is always a part of the Parliament, and the members justifying in one character what they advise and act in another, a mixed Government becomes a continual enigma; entail-

ing upon a country, by the quantity of corruption necessary to solder the parts, the expense of supporting all the forms of Government at once, and finally resolving itself into a Government by Committee; in which the advisers, the actors, the approvers, the justifiers, the persons responsible, and the persons not responsible, are the same persons.

By this pantomimical contrivance, and change of scene and character, the parts help each other out in matters which neither of them singly would assume to act. When money is to be obtained, the mass of variety apparently dissolves, and a profusion of parliamentary praises passes between the parts. Each admires with astonishment, the wisdom, the liberality, the disinterestedness of the other; and all of them breathe a pitying sigh at the burdens of the Nation.

But in a well constituted republic, nothing of this soldering, praising, and pitying, can take place; the representation being equal throughout the country, and complete in itself, however it may be arranged into legislative and executive, they have all one and the same natural source. The parts are not foreigners to each other, like democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy. As there are no discordant distinctions, there is nothing to corrupt by compromise, nor confound by contrivance. Public measures appeal of themselves to the understanding of the Nation, and, resting on their own merits, disown any flattering application to vanity. The continual whine of lamenting the burden of taxes, however successfully it may be practised in mixed Governments, is inconsistent with the sense and spirit of a republic. If taxes are necessary, they are of course advantageous; but if they require an apology, the apology itself implies an impeachment. Why then is man thus imposed upon, or why does he impose upon himself?

When men are spoken of as kings and subjects, or when Government is mentioned under the distinct or

combined heads of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, what is it that *reasoning* man is to understand by the terms? If there really existed in the world two or more distinct and separate *elements* of human power, we should then see the several origins to which those terms would descriptively apply: but as there is but one species of man, there can be but one element of human power, and that element is man himself. Monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, are but creatures of imagination; and a thousand such may be contrived, as well as three.

From the Revolutions of America and France, and the symptoms that have appeared in other countries, it is evident that the opinion of the world is changed with respect to systems of Government, and that revolutions are not within the compass of political calculations. The progress of time and circumstances, which men assign to the accomplishment of great changes, is too mechanical to measure the force of the mind, and the rapidity of reflection, by which revolutions are generated. All the old governments have received a shock from those that already appear, and which were once more improbable, and are a greater subject of wonder, than a general revolution in Europe would be now.

When we survey the wretched condition of man under the monarchical and hereditary systems of Government, dragged from his home by one power, or driven by another, and impoverished by taxes more than by enemies, it becomes evident that those systems are bad, and that a general revolution in the principle and construction of Governments is necessary.

What is government more than the management of the affairs of a Nation? It is not, and from its nature cannot be, the property of any particular man or family, but of the whole community, at whose expense it is supported; and though by force or contrivance it has been usurped into an inheritance, the usurpation cannot alter

the right of things. Sovereignty, as a matter of right, appertains to the Nation only, and not to any individual; and a Nation has at all times an inherent indefeasible right to abolish any form of Government it finds inconvenient, and establish such as accords with its interest, disposition, and happiness. The romantic and barbarous distinction of men into Kings and subjects, though it may suit the condition of courtiers, cannot that of citizens; and is exploded by the principle upon which Governments are now founded. Every citizen is a member of the sovereignty, and, as such, can acknowledge no personal subjection; and his obedience can be only to the laws.

When men think of what Government is, they must necessarily suppose it to possess a knowledge of all the objects and matters upon which its authority is to be exercised. In this view of Government the republican system, as established by America and France, operates to embrace the whole of a Nation; and the knowledge necessary to the interest of all the parts, is to be found in the centre, which the parts by representation form. But the old Governments are on a construction that excludes knowledge as well as happiness; Government by Monks, who know nothing of the world beyond the walls of a Convent, is as consistent as government by Kings.

What were formerly called Revolutions, were little more than a change of persons, or an alteration of local circumstances. They rose and fell like things of course, and had nothing in their existence or their fate that could influence beyond the spot that produced them. But what we now see in the world, from the Revolutions of America and France, is a renovation of the natural order of things, a system of principles as universal as truth and the existence of man, and combining moral with political happiness and national prosperity.

"I. *Men are born and always continue free and equal in respect to their rights. Civil distinctions, therefore, can be founded only on public utility.*

"II. *The end of all political associations is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man; and these rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance of oppression.*

"III. *The Nation is essentially the source of all Sovereignty; nor can any individual or any body of men, be entitled to any authority which is not expressly derived from it.*"

In these principles, there is nothing to throw a Nation into confusion by inflaming ambition. They are calculated to call forth wisdom and abilities, and to exercise them for the public good, and not for the emolument or aggrandizement of particular descriptions of men or families. Monarchical sovereignty, the enemy of mankind, and the source of misery, is abolished; and Sovereignty itself is restored to its natural and original place, the Nation. Were this the case throughout Europe, the cause of wars would be taken away.

It is attributed to Henry IV. of France, a man of an enlarged and benevolent heart, that he proposed, about the year 1610, a plan of abolishing war in Europe. The plan consisted in constituting an European Congress, or as the French authors style it, a Pacific Republic; by appointing delegates from the several Nations, who were to act as a Court of arbitration in any disputes that might arise between nation and nation.

Had such a plan been adopted at the time it was proposed, the taxes of England and France, as two of the parties, would have been at least ten millions sterling annually to each Nation less than they were at the commencement of the French Revolution.

To conceive a cause why such a plan has not been adopted, (and that instead of a Congress for the purpose of *preventing* war, it has been called only to *terminate* a war, after a fruitless expense of several years), it will be necessary to consider the interest of Governments as a distinct interest to that of Nations.

Whatever is the cause of taxes to a Nation, becomes also the means of revenue to a Government. Every war terminates with an addition of taxes, and consequently with an addition of revenue; and in any event of war, in the manner they are now commenced and concluded, the power and interest of Governments are increased. War, therefore, from its productiveness, as it easily furnishes the pretence of necessity for taxes and appointments to places and offices, becomes a principal part of the system of old Governments; and to establish any mode to abolish war, however advantageous it might be to Nations, would be to take from such Government the most lucrative of its branches. The frivolous matters upon which war is made, show the disposition and avidity of Governments to uphold the system of war, and betray the motives upon which they act.

Why are not Republics plunged into war, but because the nature of their Government does not admit of an interest distinct from that of the Nation? Even Holland, though an ill-constructed Republic, and with a commerce extending over the world, existed nearly a century without war: and the instant the form of Government was changed in France, the republican principles of peace and domestic prosperity and economy arose with the new Government; and the same consequences would follow the same causes in other Nations.

As war is the system of Government on the old construction, the animosity which Nations reciprocally entertain, is nothing more than what the policy of their Governments excites, to keep up the spirit of the system. Each Government accuses the other of perfidy, intrigue, and ambition, as a means of heating the imagination of their respective Nations, and incensing them to hostilities. Man is not the enemy of man, but through the medium of a false system of Government. Instead, therefore, of exclaiming against the ambition of Kings, the

exclamation should be directed against the principle of such Governments ; and instead of seeking to reform the individual, the wisdom of a Nation should apply itself to reform the system.

Whether the forms and maxims of Governments which are still in practice, were adapted to the condition of the world at the period they were established, is not in this case the question. The older they are, the less correspondence can they have with the present state of things. Time, and change of circumstances and opinions, have the same progressive effect in rendering modes of Government obsolete, as they have upon customs and manners. Agriculture, commerce, manufactures, and the tranquil arts, by which the prosperity of Nations is best promoted, require a different system of Government, and a different species of knowledge to direct its operations, than what might have been required in the former condition of the world.

As it is not difficult to perceive, from the enlightened state of mankind, that hereditary Governments are verging to their decline, and that Revolutions on the broad basis of national sovereignty, and Government by representation, are making their way in Europe, it would be an act of wisdom to anticipate their approach, and produce Revolutions by reason and accommodation, rather than commit them to the issue of convulsions.

From what we now see, nothing of reform on the political world ought to be held improbable. It is an age of Revolutions, in which every thing may be looked for. The intrigue of Courts, by which the system of war is kept up, may provoke a confederation of Nations to abolish it : and an European Congress, to patronize the progress of free Government, and promote the civilization of Nations with each other, is an event nearer in probability, than once were the revolutions and alliance of France and America.

RIGHTS OF MAN:

COMBINING

PRINCIPLE AND PRACTICE.

BY

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TO

M. DE LA FAYETTE.

AFTER an acquaintance of nearly fifteen years, in difficult situations in America, and various consultations in Europe, I feel a pleasure in presenting to you this small treatise, in gratitute for your services to my beloved America, and as a testimony of my esteem for the virtues, public and private, which I know you to possess.

The only point upon which I could ever discover that we differed was not as to principles of government, but as to time. For my own part, I think it equally as injurious to good principles to permit them to linger, as to push them on too fast. That which you suppose accomplishable in fourteen or fifteen years, I may believe practicable in a much shorter period. Mankind, as it appears to me, are always ripe enough to understand their true interest, provided it be presented clearly to their understanding, and that in a manner not to create suspicion by any thing like self-design, nor offend by assuming too much. Where we would wish to reform we must not reproach.

When the American Revolution was established, I felt a disposition to sit serenely down and enjoy the calm.

It did not appear to me that any object could afterwards arise great enough to make me quit tranquillity, and feel as I had felt before. But when principle, and not place, is the energetic cause of action, a man, I find, is everywhere the same.

I am now once more in the public world; and as I have not a right to contemplate on so many years of remaining life as you have, I am resolved to labor as fast as I can; and as I am anxious for your aid and your company, I wish you to hasten your principles and overtake me.

If you make a campaign the ensuing spring, which it is most probable there will be no occasion for, I will come and join you. Should the campaign commence, I hope it will terminate in the extinction of German despotism, and in establishing the freedom of all Germany. When France shall be surrounded with revolutions, she will be in peace and safety, and her taxes, as well as those of Germany, will consequently become less.

Your sincere,

Affectionate Friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

London, Feb. 9, 1792.

PREFACE.

WHEN I began the chapter entitled the "*Conclusion*" in the former part of the *Rights of Man*, published last year, it was my intention to have extended it to a greater length; but in casting the whole matter in my mind which I wished to add, I found that I must either make the work too bulky, or contract my plan too much. I therefore brought it to a close as soon as the subject would admit, and reserved what I had further to say to another opportunity.

Several other reasons contributed to produce this determination. I wished to know the manner in which a work, written in a style of thinking and expression different to what had been customary in England, would be received before I ventured farther. A great field was opening to the view of mankind by means of the French Revolution. Mr. Burke's outrageous opposition thereto brought the controversy into England. He attacked principles which he knew (from information) I would contest with him, because they are principles which I believe to be good, and which I have contributed to establish, and conceive myself bound to defend. Had he not urged the controversy, I had most probably been a silent man.

Another reason for deferring the remainder of the work was, that Mr. Burke promised in his first publication to renew the subject at another opportunity, and to make a comparison of what he called the English and French constitutions. I therefore held myself in reserve for him.

He has published two works since, without doing this; which he certainly would not have omitted, had the comparison been in his favor.

In his last work, his "*Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*," he has quoted about ten pages from the *Rights of Man*, and having given himself the trouble of doing this, says, "he shall not attempt in the smallest degree to refute them," meaning the principles therein contained. I am enough acquainted with Mr. Burke, to know, that he would if he could. But instead of contesting them, he immediately after consoles himself with saying, that "he has done his part." He has not done his part. He has not performed his promise of a comparison of constitutions. He started the controversy, he gave the challenge, and has fled from it; and he is now a *case in point* with his own opinion, that, "*the age of chivalry is gone!*"

The title, as well as the substance of his last work, his "*Appeal*," is his condemnation. Principles must stand on their own merits, and if they are good they certainly will. To put them under the shelter of other men's authority, as Mr. Burke has done, serves to bring them into suspicion. Mr. Burke is not very fond of dividing his honors, but in this case he is artfully dividing the disgrace.

But who are those to whom Mr. Burke has made his appeal? A set of childish thinkers and half-way politicans born in the last century; men who went no farther with any principle than as it suited their purpose as a party; the nation was always left out of the question; and this has been the character of every party from that day to this. The nation sees nothing in such works, or such politics, worthy its attention. A little matter will move a party, but it must be something great that moves a nation.

Though I see nothing in Mr. Burke's *Appeal* worth

taking much notice of, there is, however, one expression upon which I shall offer a few remarks. After quoting largely from the *Rights of Man*, and declining to contest the principles contained in that work, he says, "This will most probably be done (*if such writings shall be thought to deserve any other refutation than that of criminal justice*) by others, who may think with Mr. Burke and with the same zeal."

In the first place, it has not yet been done by anybody. Not less, I believe, than eight or ten pamphlets, intended as answer to the former part of the *Rights of Man*, have been published by different persons, and not one of them, to my knowledge, has extended to a second edition, nor are even the titles of them so much as generally remembered. As I am averse to unnecessarily multiplying publications, I have answered none of them. And as I believe that a man may write himself out of reputation when nobody else can do it, I am careful to avoid that rock.

But as I would decline unnecessary publications on the one hand, so would I avoid every thing that might appear like sullen pride on the other. If Mr. Burke, or any person on his side the question, will produce an answer to the *Rights of Man*, that shall extend to a half, or even to a fourth part of the number of copies to which the *Rights of Man* extended, I will reply to his work. But until this be done, I shall so far take the sense of the public for my guide (and the world knows I am not a flatterer) that what they do not think worth while to read, is not worth mine to answer. I suppose the number of copies to which the first part of the *Rights of Man* extended, taking England, Scotland, and Ireland, is not less than between forty and fifty thousand.

I now come to remark on the remaining part of the quotation I have made from Mr. Burke.

"If," says he, "such writings shall be thought to

deserve any other refutation than that of *criminal* justice."

Pardoning the pun, it must be *criminal* justice indeed that should condemn a work as a substitute for not being able to refute it. The greatest condemnation that could be passed upon it would be a refutation. But in proceeding by the method Mr. Burke alludes to, the condemnation would, in the final event, pass upon the criminality of the process and not upon the work, and in this case, I had rather be the author, than be either the judge, or the jury, that should condemn it.

But to come at once to the point. I have differed from some professional gentlemen on the subject of prosecutions, and I since find they are falling into my opinion, which I will here state as fully, but as concisely as I can.

I will first put a case with respect to any law, and then compare it with a government, or with what in England is, or has been, called a constitution.

It would be an act of despotism, or what in England is called arbitrary power, to make a law to prohibit investigating the principles, good or bad, on which such a law, or any other is founded.

If a law be bad, it is one thing to oppose the practice of it, but it is quite a different thing to expose its errors, to reason on its defects, and to show cause why it should be repealed, or why another ought to be substituted in its place. I have always held it an opinion (making it also my practice) that it is better to obey a bad law, making use at the same time of every argument to show its errors and procure its repeal, than forcibly to violate it; because the precedent of breaking a bad law might weaken the force, and lead to a discretionary violation of those which are good.

The case is the same with respect to principles and forms of government, or to what are called constitutions, and the parts of which they are composed.

It is for the good of nations, and not for the emolument or aggrandizement of particular individuals, that government ought to be established, and that mankind are at the expense of supporting it. The defects of every government and constitution, both as to principle and form must, on a parity of reasoning, be as open to discussion as the defects of a law, and it is a duty which every man owes to society to point them out. When those defects, and the means of remedying them are generally seen by a nation, that nation will reform its government or its constitution in the one case, as the government repealed or reformed the law in the other. The operation of government is restricted to the making and the administering of laws; but it is to a nation that the right of forming or reforming, generating or regenerating constitutions and governments belong; and consequently those subjects, as subjects of investigation, are always before a country *as a matter of right*, and cannot, without invading the general rights of that country, be made subjects for prosecution. On this ground I will meet Mr. Burke whenever he pleases. It is better that the whole argument should come out, than to seek to stifle it. It was himself that opened the controversy, and he ought not to desert it.

I do not believe that monarchy and aristocracy will continue seven years longer in any of the enlightened countries in Europe. If better reasons can be shown for them than against them, they will stand; if the contrary, they will not. Mankind are not now to be told they shall not think, or they shall not read; and publications that go no farther than to investigate principles of government, to invite men to reason and to reflect, and to show the errors and excellencies of different systems, have a right to appear. If they do not excite attention, they are not worth the trouble of a prosecution; and if they do, the prosecution will amount to nothing, since it cannot

amount to a prohibition of reading. This would be a sentence of the public, instead of the author, and would also be the most effectual mode of making or hastening revolutions.

On all cases that apply universally to a nation, with respect to systems of government, a jury of *twelve* men is not competent to decide. Where there are no witnesses to be examined, no facts to be proved, and where the whole matter is before the whole public and the merits or demerits of it resting on their opinion; and where there is nothing to be known in a court, but what every body knows out of it, every twelve men are equally as good a jury as the other, and would most probably reverse each other's verdict; or from the variety of their opinions not be able to form one. It is one case, whether a nation approve a work, or a plan; but it is quite another case, whether it will commit to any such jury the power of determining whether that nation have a right to, or shall reform its government, or not. I mention these cases, that Mr. Burke may see I have not written on Government without reflecting on what is Law, as well as on what are Rights. The only effectual jury in such cases would be, a convention of the whole nation fairly elected; for in all such cases the whole nation is the vicinage. If Mr. Burke will propose such a jury, I will waive all privileges of being the citizen of any other country, and, defending its principles, abide the issue, provided he will do the same; for my opinion is, that his work and his principles would be condemned instead of mine.

As to the prejudices which men have from education and habit, in favor of any particular form or system of government, those prejudices have yet to stand the test of reason and reflection. In fact, such prejudices are nothing. No man is prejudiced in favor of a thing, knowing it to be wrong. He is attached to it on the

belief of its being right; and when he sees it is not so, the prejudice will be gone. We have but a defective idea what prejudice is. It might be said that until men think for themselves the whole is prejudice, and *not opinion*; for that only is opinion which is the result of reason and reflection. I offer this remark, that Mr. Burke may not confide too much in what has been the customary prejudices of the country.

I do not believe that the people of England have ever been fairly and candidly dealt by. They have been imposed upon by parties, and by men assuming the character of leaders. It is time that the nation should rise above those trifles. It is time to dismiss that inattention which has so long been the encouraging cause of stretching taxation to excess. It is time to dismiss all those songs and toasts which are calculated to enslave, and operate to suffocate reflection. On all such subjects men have only to think, and they will neither act wrong nor be misled. To say that any people are not fit for freedom, is to make poverty their choice, and to say they had rather be loaded with taxes than not. If such a case could be proved, it would equally prove, that those who govern are not fit to govern them, for they are a part of the same national mass.

But admitting governments to be changed all over Europe, it certainly may be done without convulsion and revenge. It is not worth making changes or revolutions, unless it be for some great national benefit; and when this shall appear to a nation, the danger will be, as in America and France, to those who oppose; and with this reflection I close my Preface.

THOMAS PAINE.

London, Feb. 9, 1792.

RIGHTS OF MAN.

PART SECOND.

INTRODUCTION.

WHAT Archimedes said of the mechanical powers, may be applied to Reason and Liberty: "*Had we*," said he, "*a place to stand upon, we might raise the world.*"

The Revolution of America presented in politics what was only theory in mechanics. So deeply rooted were all the governments of the old world, and so effectually had the tyranny and the antiquity of habit established itself over the mind, that no beginning could be made in Asia, Africa, or Europe, to reform the political condition of man. Freedom had been hunted round the globe; reason was considered as rebellion; and the slavery of fear had made men afraid to think.

But such is the irresistible nature of truth, that all it asks, and all it wants, is the liberty of appearing. The sun needs no inscription to distinguish him from darkness; and no sooner did the American governments display themselves to the world, than despotism felt a shock, and man began to contemplate redress.

The independence of America, considered merely as a separation from England, would have been a matter but of little importance, had it not been accompanied by a revolution in the principles and practice of governments. She made a stand, not for herself only, but for the world,

and looked beyond the advantages herself could receive. Even the Hessian, though hired to fight against her, may live to bless his defeat; and England, condemning the viciousness of its government, rejoice in its miscarriage.

As America was the only spot in the political world, where the principles of universal reformation could begin, so also was it the best in the natural world. An assemblage of circumstances conspired, not only to give birth, but to add gigantic maturity to its principles. The scene which that country presents to the eye of a spectator, has something in it which generates and encourages great ideas. Nature appears to him in magnitude. The mighty objects he beholds, act upon his mind by enlarging it, and he partakes of the greatness he contemplates. Its first settlers were emigrants from different European nations, and of diversified professions of religion, retiring from the governmental persecutions of the old world, and meeting in the new, not as enemies, but as brothers. The wants which necessarily accompany the cultivation of a wilderness, produced among them a state of society, which countries, long harrassed by the quarrels and intrigues of governments, had neglected to cherish. In such a situation man becomes what he ought. He sees his species, not with the inhuman idea of a natural enemy, but as kindred; and the example shows to the artificial world, that man must go back to Nature for information.

From the rapid progress which America makes in every species of improvement, it is rational to conclude, that if the governments of Asia, Africa, and Europe, had begun on a principle similar to that of America, or had not been very early corrupted therefrom, that those countries must, by this time, have been in a far superior condition to what they are. Age after age has passed away, for no other purpose than to behold their wretchedness. Could we suppose a spectator who knew nothing of the world, and who was put into it merely to make his

observations, he would take a great part of the old world to be new, just struggling with the difficulties and hardships of an infant settlement. He could not suppose that the hordes of miserable poor, with which old countries abound, could be any other than those who had not yet had time to provide for themselves. Little would he think they were the consequence of what in such countries is called government.

If, from the more wretched parts of the old world, we look at those which are in an advanced stage of improvement, we still find the greedy hand of government thrusting itself into every corner and crevice of industry, and grasping the spoil of the multitude. Invention is continually exercised, to furnish new pretences for revenue and taxation. It watches prosperity as its prey, and permits none to escape without a tribute.

As revolutions have begun, (and the probability is always greater against a thing beginning, than of proceeding after it has begun), it is natural to expect that other revolutions will follow. The amazing and still increasing expenses with which old governments are conducted, the numerous wars they engage in or provoke, the embarrassment they throw in the way of universal civilization and commerce, and the oppression and usurpation they practice at home, have wearied out the patience, and exhausted the property of the world. In such a situation, and with the examples already existing, revolutions are to be looked for. They are become subjects of universal conversation, and may be considered as the *order of the day.*

If systems of government can be introduced, less expensive, and more productive of general happiness, than those which have existed, all attempts to oppose their progress will in the end be fruitless. Reason, like time, will make its own way, and prejudice will fall in a combat with interest. If universal peace, civilization, and

commerce, are ever to be the happy lot of man, it cannot be accomplished but by a revolution in the system of governments. All the monarchical governments are military. War is their trade, plunder and revenue their objects. While such governments continue, peace has not the absolute security of a day. What is the history of all monarchical governments, but a disgustful picture of human wretchedness, and the accidental respite of a few years repose? Wearied with war, and tired with human butchery, they sat down to rest, and called it peace. This certainly is not the condition that heaven intended for man; and if *this be monarchy*, well might monarchy be reckoned among the sins of the Jews.

The Revolutions which formerly took place in the world, had nothing in them that interested the bulk of mankind. They extended only to a change of persons and measures, but not of principles, and rose or fell among the common transactions of the moment. What we now behold, may not improperly be called a "*counter revolution.*" Conquest and tyranny, at some early period, dispossessed man of his rights, and he is now recovering them. And as the tide of all human affairs has its ebb and flow in directions contrary to each other, so also is it in this. Government founded on a *moral theory*, *on a system of universal peace*, *on the indefeasible*, *hereditary Rights of Man*, is now revolving from west to east, by a stronger impulse than the government of the sword revolved from east to west. It interests not particular individuals, but nations, in its progress, and promises a new era to the human race.

The danger to which the success of revolutions is most exposed, is that of attempting them before the principles on which they proceed, and the advantages to result from them, are sufficiently seen and understood. Almost every thing appertaining to the circumstances of a nation, has been absorbed and confounded under the general and

mysterious word *government.* Though it avoids taking to its account the errors it commits, and the mischiefs it occasions, it fails not to arrogate to itself whatever has the appearance of prosperity. It robs industry of its honors, by pedantically making itself the cause of its effects; and purloins from the general character of man, the merits that appertain to him as a social being.

It may therefore be of use, in this day of revolutions, to discriminate between those things which are the effect of government, and those which are not. This will best be done by taking a review of society and civilization, and the consequences resulting therefrom, as things distinct from what are called governments. By beginning with this investigation, we shall be able to assign effects to their proper cause, and analyze the mass of common errors.

CHAPTER I.

OF SOCIETY AND CIVILIZATION.

GREAT part of that order which reigns among mankind is not the effect of government. It had its origin in the principles of society and the natural constitution of man. It existed priôr to government, and would exist if the formality of government was abolished. The mutual dependence and reciprocal interest which man has upon man, and all parts of a civilized community upon each other, create that great chain of connection which holds it together. The landholder, the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradesman, and every occupation, prospers by the aid which each receives from the other, and from the whole. Common interest regulates their concerns, and forms their laws; and the laws which common usage ordains, have a greater influence than the laws of government. In fine, society performs for itself almost every thing which is ascribed to government.

To understand the nature and quantity of government proper for man, it is necessary to attend to his character. As Nature created him for social life, she fitted him for the station she intended. In all cases she made his natural wants greater than his individual powers. No one man is capable, without the aid of society, of supplying his own wants; and those wants acting upon every individual, impel the whole of them into society, as naturally as gravitation acts to a center.

But she has gone further. She has not only forced man into society, by a diversity of wants, which the reciprocal aid of each other can supply, but she has implanted in him a system of social affections, which, though not necessary to his existence, are essential to his happiness. There is no period in life when this love for society ceases to act. It begins and ends with our being.

If we examine, with attention, into the composition and constitution of man, the diversity of his wants, and the diversity of talents in different men for reciprocally accommodating the wants of each other, his propensity to society, and consequently to preserve the advantages resulting from it, we shall easily discover, that a great part of what is called government is mere imposition.

Government is no farther necessary than to supply the few cases to which society and civilization are not conveniently competent; and instances are not wanting to show, that every thing which government can usefully add thereto, has been performed by the common consent of society, without government.

For upwards of two years from the commencement of the American war, and to a longer period in several of the American States, there were no established forms of government. The old governments had been abolished, and the country was too much occupied in defence, to employ its attention in establishing new governments; yet during this interval, order and harmony were preserved as inviolate as in any country in Europe. There is a natural aptness in man, and more so in society, because it embraces a greater variety of abilities and resource, to accommodate itself to whatever situation it is in. The instant formal government is abolished, society begins to act. A general association takes place, and common interest produces common security.

So far is it from being true, as has been pretended, that the abolition of any formal government is the dissolution

of society, that it acts by a contrary impulse, and brings the latter the closer together. All that part of its organization which it had committed to its government, devolves again upon itself, and acts through its medium. When men, as well from natural instinct, as from reciprocal benefits, have habituated themselves to social and civilized life, there is always enough of its principles in practice to carry them through any changes they may find necessary or convenient to make in their government. In short, man is so naturally a creature of society, that it is almost impossible to put him out of it.

Formal government makes but a small part of civilized life; and when even the best that human wisdom can devise is established, it is a thing more in name and idea, than in fact. It is to the great and fundamental principles of society and civilization — to the common usage universally consented to, and mutually and reciprocally maintained — to the unceasing circulation of interest, which, passing through its million channels, invigorates the whole mass of civilized man — it is to these things, infinitely more than to any thing which even the best instituted government can perform, that the safety and prosperity of the individual and of the whole depends.

The more perfect civilization is, the less occasion has it for government, because the more does it regulate its own affairs, and govern itself; but so contrary is the practice of old governments to the reason of the case, that the expenses of them increase in the proportion they ought to diminish. It is but few general laws that civilized life requires, and those of such common usefulness, that whether they are enforced by the forms of government or not, the effect will be nearly the same. If we consider what the principles are that first condense men into society, and what the motives that regulate their mutual intercourse afterwards, we shall find, by the time we arrive at what is called government, that nearly

the whole of the business is performed by the natural operation of the parts upon each other.

Man, with respect to all those matters, is more a creature of consistency than he is aware, or that governments would wish him to believe. All the great laws of society are laws of nature. Those of trade and commerce, whether with respect to the intercourse of individuals, or of nations, are laws of mutual and reciprocal interest. They are followed and obeyed because it is the interest of the parties so to do, and not on account of any formal laws their governments may impose or interpose.

But how often is the natural propensity to society disturbed or destroyed by the operations of government. When the latter, instead of being ingrafted on the principles of the former, assumes to exist for itself, and acts by partialities of favor and oppression, it becomes the cause of the mischiefs it ought to prevent.

If we look back to the riots and tumults, which at various times have happened in England, we shall find, that they did not proceed from the want of a government, but that government was itself the generating cause; instead of consolidating society, it divided it; it deprived it of its natural cohesion, and engendered discontents and disorders, which otherwise would not have existed. In those associations which men promiscuously form for the purpose of trade, or of any concern, in which government is totally out of the question, and in which they act merely on the principles of society, we see how naturally the various parties unite; and this shows, by comparison, that governments, so far from being always the cause or means of order, are often the destruction of it. The riots of 1780 had no other source than the remains of those prejudices, which the government itself had encouraged. But with respect to England there are also other causes.

Excess and inequality of taxation, however disguised in the means, never fail to appear in their effects. As a

great mass of the community are thrown thereby into poverty and discontent, they are constantly on the brink of commotion; and deprived, as they unfortunately are, of the means of information, are easily heated to outrage. Whatever the apparent cause of any riots may be, the real one is always want of happiness. It shows that something is wrong in the system of government, that injures the felicity by which society is to be preserved.

But as fact is superior to reasoning, the instance of America presents itself to confirm these observations. If there is a country in the world, where concord, according to common calculation, would be least expected, it is America. Made up, as it is, of people from different nations,* accustomed to different forms and habits of government, speaking different languages, and more different in their modes of worship, it would appear that the union of such a people was impracticable; but by the simple operation of constructing government on the principles of society and the rights of man, every difficulty retires, and all the parts are brought into cordial unison. There the poor are not oppressed, the rich are not privileged. Industry is not mortified by the splendid extravagance of a court rioting at its expense. Their taxes are few, because their government is just; and as there is nothing to render them wretched, there is nothing to engender riots and tumults.

A metaphysical man, like Mr. Burke, would have tortured his invention to discover how such a people could

* That part of America which is generally called New England, including New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, is peopled chiefly by English descendants. In the State of New York, about half are Dutch, the rest English, Scotch, and Irish. In New Jersey, a mixture of English and Dutch, with some Scotch and Irish. In Pennsylvania, about one-third are English, another Germans, and the remainder Scotch and Irish, with some Swedes. The States to the southward have a greater proportion of English than the middle States, but in all of them there is a mixture; and besides those enumerated, there are a considerable number of French, and some few of all the European nations lying on the coast. The most numerous religious denomination are the Presbyterians; but no one sect is established above another, and all men are equally citizens.

be governed. He would have supposed that some must be managed by fraud, others by force, and all by some contrivance; that genius must be hired to impose upon ignorance, and show and parade to fascinate the vulgar. Lost in the abundance of his researches, he would have resolved and re-resolved, and finally overlooked the plain and easy road that lay directly before him.

One of the great advantages of the American revolution has been, that it led to a discovery of the principles, and laid open the imposition, of governments. All the revolutions till then had been worked within the atmosphere of a court, and never on the great floor of a nation. The parties were always of the class of courtiers; and whatever was their rage for reformation, they carefully preserved that fraud of the profession.

In all cases they took care to represent government as a thing made up of mysteries, which only themselves understood; and they hid from the understanding of the nation, the only thing that was beneficial to know, namely, *That government is nothing more than a national association acting on the principles of society.*

Having thus endeavored to show, that the social and civilized state of man is capable of performing within itself, almost every thing necessary to its protection and government, it will be proper, on the other hand, to take a review of the present old governments, and examine whether their principles and practice are correspondent thereto.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE ORIGIN OF THE PRESENT OLD GOVERNMENTS.

IT is impossible that such governments as have hitherto existed in the world, could have commenced by any other means than a total violation of every principle sacred and moral. The obscurity in which the origin of all the present old governments is buried, implies the iniquity and disgrace with which they began. The origin of the present government of America and France will ever be remembered, because it is honorable to record it; but with respect to the rest, even Flattery has consigned them to the tomb of time, without an inscription.

It could have been no difficult thing in the early and solitary ages of the world, while the chief employment of men was that of attending flocks and herds, for a banditti of ruffians to overrun a country, and lay it under contributions. Their power being thus established, the chief of the band contrived to lose the name of Robber in that of Monarch; and hence the origin of Monarchy and Kings.

The origin of the government of England, so far as relates to what is called its line of monarchy, being one of the latest, is perhaps the best recorded. The hatred which the Norman invasion and tyranny begat, must have been deeply rooted in the nation, to have outlived

the contrivance to obliterate it. Though not a courtier will talk of the curfew-bell, not a village in England has forgotten it.

Those bands of robbers having parcelled out the world and divided it into dominions, began, as is naturally the case, to quarrel with each other. What at first was obtained by violence, was considered by others as lawful to be taken, and a second plunderer succeeded the first. They alternately invaded the dominions which each had assigned to himself, and the brutality with which they treated each other explains the original character of monarchy. It was ruffian torturing ruffian. The conqueror considered the conquered, not as his prisoner, but his property. He led him in triumph rattling in chains, and doomed him, at pleasure, to slavery or death. As time obliterated the history of their beginning, their successors assumed new appearances, to cut off the entail of their disgrace, but their principles and objects remained the same. What at first was plunder, assumed the softer name of revenue; and the power originally usurped, they affected to inherit.

From such beginning of governments, what could be expected, but a continual system of war and extortion? It has established itself into a trade. The vice is not peculiar to one more than to another, but is the common principle of all. There does not exist within such governments sufficient stamina whereon to ingraft reformation; and the shortest, easiest, and most effectual remedy, is to begin anew.

What scenes of horror, what perfection of iniquity, present themselves in contemplating the character, and reviewing the history of such governments! If we would delineate human nature with a baseness of heart, and hypocrisy of countenance, that reflection would shudder at and humanity disown, it is kings, courts, and cabinets, that must sit for the portrait. Man, naturally

as he is, with all his faults about him, is not up to the character.

Can we possibly suppose that if governments had originated in a right principle, and had not an interest in pursuing a wrong one, that the world could have been in the wretched and quarrelsome condition we have seen it? What inducement has the farmer, while following the plough, to lay aside his peaceful pursuit, and go to war with the farmer of another country? Or what inducement has the manufacturer? What is dominion to them, or to any class of men in a nation? Does it add an acre to any man's estate, or raise its value? Are not conquest and defeat each of the same price, and taxes the never failing consequence? Though this reasoning may be good to a nation, it is not so to a government. War is the faro-table of governments, and nations the dupes of the games.

If there is any thing to wonder at in this miserable scene of governments, more than might be expected, it is the progress which the peaceful arts of agriculture, manufacture and commerce have made, beneath such a long accumulating load of discouragement and oppression. It serves to show, that instinct in animals does not act with stronger impulse, than the principles of society and civilization operate in man. Under all discouragements, he pursues his object, and yields to nothing but impossibilities.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE OLD AND NEW SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT.

NOTHING can appear more contradictory than the principles on which the old governments began, and the condition to which society, civilization, and commerce, are capable of carrying mankind. Government on the old system is an assumption of power, for the aggrandizement of itself; on the new, a delegation of power, for the common benefit of society. The former supports itself by keeping up a system of war; the latter promotes a system of peace, as the true means of enriching a nation. The one encourages national prejudices; the other promotes universal society, as the means of universal commerce. The one measures its prosperity, by the quantity of revenue it extorts; the other proves its excellence, by the small quantity of taxes it requires.

Mr. Burke has talked of old and new whigs. If he can amuse himself with childish names and distinctions, I shall not interrupt his pleasure. It is not to him, but to the Abbé Sieyes, that I address this chapter. I am already engaged to the latter gentleman, to discuss the subject of monarchical government; and as it naturally occurs in comparing the old and new systems, I make this the opportunity of presenting to him my observations. I shall occasionally take Mr. Burke in my way.

Though it might be proved that the system of government now called the NEW, is the most ancient in principle of all that have existed, being founded on the

original inherent Rights of Man: yet, as tyranny and the sword have suspended the exercise of those rights for many centuries past, it serves better the purpose of distinction to call it a *new*, than to claim the right of calling it the old.

The first general distinction between those two systems is, that the one now called the old is *hereditary*, either in whole or in part; and the new is entirely *representative*. It rejects all hereditary government:

First, as being an imposition on mankind.

Secondly, as being inadequate to the purposes for which government is necessary.

With respect to the first of these heads. It cannot be proved by what right hereditary government could begin: neither does there exist within the compass of mortal power a right to establish it. Man has no authority over posterity in matters of personal right; and therefore, no man, or body of men, had, or can have, a right to set up hereditary government. Were even ourselves to come again into existence, instead of being succeeded by posterity, we have not now the right of taking from ourselves the rights which would then be ours. On what ground, then, do we pretend to take them from others?

All hereditary government is in its nature tyranny. An heritable crown, or an heritable throne, or by what other fanciful name such things may be called, have no other significant explanation than that mankind are heritable property. To inherit a government, is to inherit the people, as if they were flocks and herds.

With respect to the second head, that of being inadequate to the purposes for which government is necessary, we have only to consider what government essentially is, and compare it with the circumstances to which hereditary succession is subject.

Government ought to be a thing always in maturity. It ought to be so constructed as to be superior to all the

accidents to which individual man is subject; and therefore, hereditary succession, by being *subject to them all*, is the most irregular and imperfect of all the systems of government.

We have heard the *Rights of Man* called a *levelling* system; but the only system to which the word *levelling* is truly applicable, is the hereditary monarchical system. It is a system of *mental levelling*. It indiscriminately admits every species of character to the same authority. Vice and virtue, ignorance and wisdom, in short, every quality, good or bad, is put on the same level. Kings succeed each other, not as rationals, but as animals. It signifies not what their mental or moral characters are. Can we then be surprised at the abject state of the human mind in monarchical countries, when the government itself is formed on such an abject levelling system? It has no fixed character. To-day it is one thing; to-morrow it is something else. It changes with the temper of every succeeding individual, and is subject to all the varieties of each. It is government through the medium of passions and accidents. It appears under all the various characters of childhood, decrepitude, dotage, a thing at nurse, in leading-strings, or on crutches. It reverses the wholesome order of nature. It occasionally puts children over men, and the conceits of non-age over wisdom and experience. In short, we cannot conceive a more ridiculous figure of government, than hereditary succession, in all its cases, presents.

Could it be made a decree in nature, or an edict registered in heaven, and man could know it, that virtue and wisdom should invariably appertain to hereditary succession, the objections to it would be removed; but when we see that nature acts as if she disowned and sported with the hereditary system; that the mental characters of successors, in all countries, are below the average of human understanding; that one is a tyrant, another an

idiot, a third insane, and some all three together, it is impossible to attach confidence to it, when reason in man has power to act.

It is not to the Abbé Sieyes that I need apply this reasoning; he has already saved me that trouble, by giving his own opinion upon the case. "If it be asked," says he, "what is my opinion with respect to hereditary right, I answer, without hesitation, that, in good theory, an hereditary transmission of any power or office, can never accord with the laws of a true representation. Hereditaryship is, in this sense, as much an attaint upon principle, as an outrage upon society. But let us," continues he, "refer to the history of all elective monarchies and principalities: is there one in which the elective mode is not worse than the hereditary succession?"

As to debating on which is the worst of the two, is admitting both to be bad; and herein we are agreed. The preference which the Abbé has given, is a condemnation of the thing he prefers. Such a mode of reasoning on such a subject is inadmissible, because it finally amounts to an accusation upon Providence, as if she had left to man no other choice with respect to government than between two evils, the best of which he admits to be "*an attaint upon principle, and an outrage upon society.*"

Passing over, for the present, all the evils and mischiefs which monarchy has occasioned in the world, nothing can more effectually prove its uselessness in a state of *civil government*, than making it hereditary. Would we make any office hereditary that required wisdom and abilities to fill it? And where wisdom and abilities are not necessary, such an office, whatever it may be, is superfluous or insignificant.

Hereditary succession is a burlesque upon monarchy. It puts it in the most ridiculous light, by presenting it as an office, which any child or idiot may fill. It requires

some talents to be a common mechanic; but to be a king, requires only the animal figure of man—a sort of breathing automaton. This sort of superstition may last a few years more, but it cannot long resist the awakened reason and interest of man.

As to Mr. Burke, he is a stickler for monarchy, not altogether as a pensioner, if he is one, which I believe, but as a political man. He has taken up a contemptible opinion of mankind, who in their turn, are taking up the same of him. He considers them as a herd of beings that must be governed by fraud, effigy, and show; and an idol would be as good a figure of monarchy with him, as a man. I will, however, do him the justice to say, that, with respect to America, he has been very complimentary. He always contended, at least in my hearing, that the people of America are more enlightened than those of England, or of any other country in Europe; and that therefore the imposition of show was not necessary in their government.

Though the comparison between hereditary and elective monarchy, which the Abbé has made, is unnecessary to the case, because the representative system rejects both; yet, were I to make the comparison, I should decide contrary to what he has done.

The civil wars which have originated from contested hereditary claims, are numerous, and have been more dreadful, and of longer continuance, than those which have been occasioned by election. All the civil wars in France arose from the hereditary system; they were either produced by hereditary claims, or by the imperfection of the hereditary form, which admits of regencies, or monarchies at nurse. With respect to England, its history is full of the same misfortunes. The contests for succession between the houses of York and Lancaster, lasted a whole century; and others of a similar nature, have renewed themselves since that period.

Those of 1715 and 1745, were of the same kind. The succession-war for the crown of Spain, embroiled almost half of Europe. The disturbances in Holland are generated from the hereditaryship of the Stadtholder. A government calling itself free, with an hereditary office, is like a thorn in the flesh, that produces a fermentation which endeavors to discharge it.

But I might go further, and place also foreign wars, of whatever kind, to the same cause. It is by adding the evil of hereditary succession to that of monarchy, that a permanent family interest is created, whose constant objects are dominion and revenue. Poland, though an elective monarchy, has had fewer wars than those which are hereditary; and it is the only government that has made a voluntary essay, though but a small one, to reform the condition of the country.

Having thus glanced at a few of the defects of the old, or hereditary systems of government, let us compare it with the new, or representative system.

The representative system takes society and civilization for its basis; nature, reason, and experience for its guide.

Experience, in all ages, and in all countries, has demonstrated, that it is impossible to control Nature in her distribution of mental powers. She gives them as she pleases. Whatever is the rule by which she, apparently to us, scatters them among mankind, that rule remains a secret to man. It would be as ridiculous to attempt to fix the hereditaryship of human beauty, as of wisdom. Whatever wisdom constituently is, it is like a seedless plant; it may be reared when it appears, but it cannot be voluntarily produced. There is always a sufficiency somewhere in the general mass of society for all purposes; but with respect to the parts of society, it is continually changing its place. It rises in one to-day, in another to-morrow, and has most probably visited in

rotation every family of the earth, and again withdrawn.

As this is the order of nature, the order of government must necessarily follow it, or government will, as we see it does, degenerate into ignorance. The hereditary system, therefore, is as repugnant to human wisdom, as to human rights; and is as absurd, as it is unjust.

As the republic of letters brings forward the best literary productions, by giving to genius a fair and universal chance; so the representative system of government is calculated to produce the wisest laws, by collecting wisdom where it can be found. I smile to myself when I contemplate the ridiculous insignificance into which literature and all the sciences would sink, were they made hereditary; and I carry the same idea into governments. An hereditary governor is as inconsistent as an hereditary author. I know not whether Homer or Euclid had sons; but I will venture an opinion, that if they had, and had left their works unfinished, those sons could not have completed them.

Do we need a stronger evidence of the absurdity of hereditary government, than is seen in the descendants of those men, in any line of life, who once were famous? Is there scarcely an instance in which there is not a total reverse of the character? It appears as if the tide of mental faculties flowed as far as it could in certain channels, and then forsook its course, and arose in others. How irrational then is the hereditary system which establishes channels of power, in company with which wisdom refuses to flow! By continuing this absurdity, man is perpetually in contradiction with himself; he accepts, for a king, or a chief magistrate, or a legislator, a person whom he would not elect for a constable.

It appears to general observation, that revolutions create genius and talents; but those events do no more than bring them forward. There is existing in man, a

mass of sense lying in a dormant state, and which, unless something excites it to action, will descend with him, in that condition, to the grave. As it is to the advantage of society that the whole of its faculties should be employed, the construction of government ought to be such as to bring forward, by a quiet and regular operation, all that extent of capacity which never fails to appear in revolutions.

This cannot take place in the insipid state of hereditary government, not only because it prevents, but because it operates to benumb. When the mind of a nation is bowed down by any political superstition in its government, such as hereditary succession is, it loses a considerable portion of its powers on all other subjects and objects. Hereditary succession requires the same obedience to ignorance, as to wisdom; and when once the mind can bring itself to pay this indiscriminate reverence, it descends below the stature of mental manhood. It is fit to be great only in little things. It acts a treachery upon itself, and suffocates the sensations that urge to detection.

Though the ancient governments present to us a miserable picture of the condition of man, there is one which above all others exempts itself from the general description. I mean the democracy of the Athenians. We see more to admire, and less to condemn, in that great, extraordinary people, than in any thing which history affords.

Mr. Burke is so little acquainted with constituent principles of government, that he confounds democracy and and representation together. Representation was a thing unknown in the ancient democracies. In those the mass of the people met and enacted laws (grammatically speaking) in the first person. Simple democracy was no other than the common hall of the ancients. It signifies the *form*, as well as the public principle of the government.

As these democracies increased in population, and the territory extended, the simple democratical form became unwieldly and impracticable; and as the system of representation was not known, the consequence was, they either degenerated convulsively into monarchies, or became absorbed into such as then existed. Had the system of representation been then understood, as it now is, there is no reason to believe that those forms of government, now called monarchical and aristocratical, would ever have taken place. It was the want of some method to consolidate the parts of society, after it became too populous, and too extensive for the simple democratical form, and also the lax and solitary condition of shepherds and herdsmen in other parts of the world, that afforded opportunities to those unnatural modes of government to begin.

As it is necessary to clear away the rubbish of errors, into which the subject of government has been thrown, I shall proceed to remark on some others.

It has always been the political craft of courtiers and court-governments, to abuse something which they called republicanism; but what republicanism was, or is, they never attempt to explain. Let us examine a little into this case.

The only forms of government are, the democratical, the aristocratical, the monarchical, and what is now called the representative.

What is called a *republic*, is not any *particular form* of government. It is wholly characteristical of the purport, matter, or object for which government ought to be instituted, and on which it is to be employed, *res-publica*, the public affairs, or the public good; or, literally translated, the *public thing*. It is a word of a good original, referring to what ought to be the character and business of government; and in this sense it is naturally opposed to the word *monarchy*, which has a base original signifi-

cation. It means arbitrary power in an individual person; in the exercise of which, *himself*, and not the *res-publica*, is the object.

Every government that does not act on the principle of a *Republic*, or in other words, that does not make the *res-publica* its whole and sole object, is not a good government. Republican government is no other than government established and conducted for the interest of the public, as well individually as collectively. It is not necessarily connected with any particular form, but it most naturally associates with the representative form, as being best calculated to secure the end for which a nation is at the expense of supporting it.

Various forms of government have affected to style themselves a republic. Poland calls itself a republic, which is an hereditary aristocracy, with what is called an elective monarchy. Holland calls itself a republic, which is chiefly aristocratical, with an hereditary stadtholdership. But the government of America, which is wholly on the system of representation, is the only real republic in character and practice, that now exists. Its government has no other object than the public business of the nation, and therefore it is properly a republic; and the Americans have taken care that *this*, and no other, shall always be the object of the government, by their rejecting every thing hereditary, and establishing government on the system of representation only.

Those who have said that a republic is not a *form* of government calculated for countries of great extent, mistook, in the first place, the *business* of a government, for a *form* of government; for the *res-publica* equally appertains to every extent of territory and population. And, in the second place, if they meant any thing with respect to *form*, it was the simple democratical form, such as was the mode of government in the ancient democracies, in which there was no representation. The

case therefore, is not, that a republic cannot be extensive, but that it cannot be extensive on the simple democratical form; and the question naturally presents itself, *What is the best form of government for conducting the* RES-PUBLICA, *or the* PUBLIC BUSINESS *of a nation, after it becomes too extensive and populous for the simple democratical form?*

It cannot be monarchy, because monarchy is subject to an objection of the same amount to which the simple democratical form was subject.

It is possible that an individual may lay down a system of principles, on which government shall be constitutionally established to any extent of territory. This is no more than an operation of the mind, acting by its own powers. But the practice upon those principles, as applying to the various and numerous circumstances of a nation, its agriculture, manufacture, trade, commerce, &c., requires a knowledge of a different kind, and which can be had only from the various parts of society. It is an assemblage of practical knowledge, which no one individual can possess; and therefore the monarchical form is as much limited, in useful practice, from the incompetency of knowledge, as was the democratical form, from the multiplicity of population. The one degenerates, by extension, into confusion; the other, into ignorance and incapacity, of which all the great monarchies are an evidence. The monarchical form, therefore, could not be a substitute for the democratical, because it has equal inconveniences.

Much less could it when made hereditary. This is the most effectual of all forms to preclude knowledge. Neither could the high democratical mind have voluntarily yielded itself to be governed by children and idiots, and all the motley insignificance of character, which attends such a mere animal system, the disgrace and the reproach of reason and of man.

As to the aristocratical form, it has the same vices and defects with the monarchical, except that the chance of abilites is better from the proportion of numbers, but there is still no security for the right use and application of them.*

Referring, then, to the original simple democracy, it affords the true data from which government on a large scale can begin. It is incapable of extension, not from its principle, but from the inconvenience of its form; and monarchy and aristocracy, from their incapacity. Retaining, then, democracy as the ground, and rejecting the corrupt systems of monarchy and aristocracy, the representative system naturally presents itself; remedying at once the defects of the simple democracy as to form, and the incapacity of the other two with respect to knowledge.

Simple democracy was society governing itself without the aid of secondary means. By ingrafting representation upon democracy, we arrive at a system of government capable of embracing and confederating all the various interests and every extent of territory and population; and that also with advantages as much superior to hereditary government, as the republic of letters is to hereditary literature.

It is on this system that the American government is founded. It is representation ingrafted upon democracy. It has fixed the form by a scale parallel in all cases to the extent of the principle. What Athens was in miniature, America will be in magnitude. The one was the wonder of the ancient world; the other is becoming the admiration and model of the present. It is the easiest of all the forms of government to be understood, and the most eligible in practice; and excludes at once the ignorance and insecurity of the hereditary mode, and the inconvenience of the simple democracy.

* For a character of aristocracy, the reader is referred to *Rights of Man*, Part I, page 60, *et seq.*

It is impossible to conceive a system of government capable of acting over such an extent of territory, and such a circle of interests, as is immediately produced by the operation of representation. France, great and populous as it is, is but a spot in the capaciousness of the system. It adapts itself to all possible cases. It is preferable to simple democracy even in small territories. Athens, by representation, would have outrivalled her own democracy.

That which is called government, or rather that which we ought to conceive government to be, is no more than some common centre, in which all the parts of society unite. This cannot be accomplished by any method so conducive to the various interests of the community, as by the representative system. It concentrates the knowledge necessary to the interests of the parts, and of the whole. It places government in a state of constant maturity. It is, as has been already observed, never young, never old. It is subject neither to nonage, nor dotage. It is never in the cradle, nor on crutches. It admits not of a separation between knowledge and power, and is superior, as government always ought to be, to all the accidents of individual man, and is therefore superior to what is called monarchy.

A nation is not a body, the figure of which is to be represented by the human body; but is like a body contained within a circle, having a common centre, in which every radius meets; and that centre is formed by representation. To connect representation with what is called monarchy, is eccentric government. Representation is of itself the delegated monarchy of a nation, and cannot debase itself by dividing it with another.

Mr. Burke has two or three times, in his parliamentary speeches, and in his publications, made use of a jingle of words that convey no ideas. Speaking of Government, he says, "it is better to have monarchy for its basis, and

republicanism for its corrective, than republicanism for its basis, and monarchy for its corrective." If he means that it is better to correct folly with wisdom, than wisdom with folly, I will not otherwise contend with him, than that it would be much better to reject the folly entirely.

But what is this thing that Mr. Burke calls monarchy? Will he explain it? All men can understand what representation is; and that it must necessarily include a variety of knowledge and talents. But, what security is there for the same qualities on the part of monarchy? Or, when this monarchy is a child, where then is the wisdom? What does it know about government? Who then is the monarch, or where is the monarchy? If it is to be performed by regency, it proves it to be a farce. A regency is a mock species of republic, and the whole of monarchy deserves no better description. It is a thing as various as imagination can paint. It has none of the stable character that government ought to possess. Every succession is a revolution, and every regency a counter-revolution. The whole of it is a scene of perpetual court cabal and intrigue, of which Mr. Burke is himself an instance.

To render monarchy consistent with government, the next in succession should not be born a child, but a man at once, and that man a Solomon. It it ridiculous that nations are to wait, and government be interrupted, till boys grow to be men.

Whether I have too little sense to see, or too much to be imposed upon; whether I have too much or too little pride, or of anything else, I leave out of the question; but certain it is, that what is called monarchy, always appears to me a silly, contemptible thing. I compare it to something kept behind a curtain, about which there is a great deal of bustle and fuss, and a wonderful air of seeming solemnity; but when, by any accident, the cur-

tain happens to be open, and the company see what it is, they burst into laughter.

In the representative system of government, nothing of this can happen. Like the nation itself, it possesses a perpetual stamina, as well of body as of mind, and presents itself on the open theatre of the world in a fair and manly manner. Whatever are its excellencies or its defects, they are visible to all. It exists not by fraud and mystery; it deals not in cant and sophistry; but inspires a language, that, passing from heart to heart, is felt and understood.

We must shut our eyes against reason, we must basely degrade our understanding, not to see the folly of what is called monarchy. Nature is orderly in all her works; but this is a mode of government that counteracts nature. It turns the progress of the human faculties upside down. It subjects age to be governed by children, and wisdom by folly.

On the contrary, the representative system is always parallel with the order and immutable laws of nature, and meets the reason of man in every part. For example:

In the American federal government, more power is delegated to the President of the United States, than to any other individual member of Congress. He cannot, therefore, be elected to this office under the age of thirty-five years. By this time the judgment of man becomes matured, and he has lived long enough to be acquainted with men and things, and the country with him. But on the monarchical plan, (exclusive of the numerous chances there are against every man born into the world, of drawing a prize in the lottery of human faculties), the next in succession, whatever he may be, is put at the head of a nation, and of a government, at the age of eighteen years. Does this appear like an act of wisdom? Is it consistent with the proper dignity and the manly character of a nation? Where is the propriety of calling

such a lad the father of the people? In all other cases, a person is a minor until the age of twenty-one years. Before this period, he is not trusted with the management of an acre of land, or with the heritable property of a flock of sheep, or an herd of swine; but, wonderful to tell! he may, at the age of eighteen years, be trusted with a nation.

That monarchy is all a bubble, a mere court artifice to procure money, is evident, (at least to me), in every character in which it can be viewed. It would be impossible, on the rational system of representative government, to make out a bill of expenses to such an enormous amount as this deception admits. Government is not of itself a very chargeable institution. The whole expense of the federal government of America, founded, as I have already said, on the system of representation, and extending over a country nearly ten times as large as England, is but six hundred thousand dollars, or one hundred and thirty thousand pounds sterling.

I presume, that no man in his sober senses will compare the character of any of the kings of Europe with that of General Washington. Yet, in France, and also in England, the expense of the civil list only, for the support of one man, is eight times greater than the whole expense of the federal government in America. To assign a reason for this, appears almost impossible. The generality of people in America, especially the poor, are more able to pay taxes, than the generality of people either in France or England.

But the case is, that the representative system diffuses such a body of knowledge throughout a nation, on the subject of government, as to explode ignorance and preclude imposition. The craft of courts cannot be acted on that ground. There is no place for mystery; nowhere for it to begin. Those who are not in the representation, know as much of the nature of business as

those who are. An affectation of mysterious importance would there be scouted. Nations can have no secrets; and the secrets of courts, like those of individuals, are always their defects.

In the representative system, the reason for every thing must publicly appear. Every man is a proprietor in government and considers it a necessary part of his business to understand. It concerns his interest, because it affects his property. He examines the cost, and compares it with the advantages; and above all, he does not adopt the slavish custom of following what in other governments are called LEADERS.

It can only be by blinding the understanding of man, and making him believe that government is some wonderful mysterious thing, that excessive revenues are obtained. Monarchy is well calculated to ensure this end. It is the popery of government; a thing kept up to amuse the ignorant, and quiet them into paying taxes.

The government of a free country, properly speaking, is not in the persons, but in the laws. The enacting of those requires no great expense; and when they are administered, the whole of civil government is performed —the rest is all court contrivance.

CHAPTER IV.

ON CONSTITUTIONS.

THAT men mean distinct and separate things when they speak of constitutions and of government, is evident; or why are those terms distinctly and separately used? A constitution is not the act of a government, but of a people constituting a government; and government without a constitution, is power without a right.

All power exercised over a nation, must have some beginning. It must be either delegated, or assumed. There are no other sources. All delegated power is trust, and all assumed power is usurpation. Time does not alter the nature and quality of either.

It viewing this subject, the case and circumstances of America present themselves as in the beginning of a world; and our enquiry into the origin of government is shortened, by referring to the facts that have arisen in our own day. We have no occasion to roam for information into the obscure field of antiquity, nor hazard ourselves upon conjecture. We are brought at once to the point of seeing government begin, as if we had lived in the beginning of time. The real volume, not of history, but of facts, is directly before us, unmutilated by contrivance, or the errors of tradition.

I will here concisely state the commencement of the American constitutions; by which the difference between constitutions and government will sufficiently appear.

It may not be improper to remind the reader, that the United States of America consist of thirteen separate states, each of which established a government for itself, after the Declaration of Independence, done the fourth of July, 1776. Each state acted independently of the rest, in forming its government; but the same general principle pervades the whole. When the several state governments were formed, they proceeded to form the federal government, that acts over the whole in all matters which concern the interest of the whole, or which relate to the intercourse of the several states with each other, or with foreign nations. I will begin with giving an instance from one of the state governments, (that of Pensylvania) and then proceed to the federal government.

The State of Pennsylvania, through nearly of the same extent of territory as England, was then divided into only twelve counties. Each of those counties had elected a committee at the commencement of the dispute with the English government; and as the city of Philadelphia, which also had its committee, was the most central for intelligence, it became the center of communication to the several county committees. When it became necessary to proceed to the formation of a government, the committee of Philadelpia proposed a conference of all the county committees, to be held in that city, and which met the latter end of July, 1776.

Though these committees had been elected by the people, they were not elected expressly for the purpose, nor invested with the authority of forming a constitution; and as they could not, consistently with the American idea of rights, assume such a power, they could only confer upon the matter, and put it into a train of operation. The conferees, therefore, did no more than state the case, and recommend to the several counties to elect six representatives for each county, to

meet in convention at Philadelphia, with powers to form a constitution, and propose it for public consideration.

This convention, of which Benjamin Franklin was president, having met and deliberated, and agreed upon a constitution, they next ordered it to be published, not as a thing established, but for the consideration of the whole people, their approbation or rejection, and then adjourned to a stated time. When the time of adjournment was expired, the convention re-assembled; and as the general opinion of the people in approbation of it was then known, the constitution was signed, sealed, and proclaimed on the *authority of the people;* and the original instrument deposited as a public record. The convention then appointed a day for the general election of the representatives who were to compose the government, and the time it should commence; and having done this, they dissolved, and returned to their several homes and occupations.

In this constitution were laid down, first, a declaration of rights. Then followed the form which the government should have, and the powers it should possess—the authority of the courts of judicature, and of juries—the manner in which elections should be conducted, and the proportion of representatives to the number of electors—the time which each succeeding assembly should continue, which was one year—the mode of levying, and of accounting for the expenditure, of public money—of appointing public officers, &c.

No article of this constitution could be altered or infringed at the discretion of the government that was to ensue. It was to that government a law. But as it would have been unwise to preclude the benefit of experience, and in order also to prevent the accumulation of errors, if any should be found, and to preserve a unison of government with the circumstances of the state at all times, the constitution provided, that, at the expiration

of every seven years, a convention should be elected, for the express purpose of revising the constitution, and making alterations, additions, or abolitions therein, if any such should be found necessary.

Here we see a regular process—a government issuing out of a constitution, formed by the people in their original character; and that constitution serving, not only as an authority, but as a law of control to the government. It was the political bible of the state. Scarcely a family was without it. Every member of the government had a copy; and nothing was more common when any debate arose on the principle of a bill, or on the extent of any species of authority, than for the members to take the printed constitution out of their pocket, and read the chapter with which such matter in debate was connected.

Having thus given an instance from one of the states, I will show the proceedings by which the federal constitution of the United States arose and was formed.

Congress, at its two first meetings, in September 1774, and May 1775, was nothing more than a deputation from the legislatures of the several provinces, afterward states; and had no other authority than what arose from common consent, and the necessity of its acting as a public body. In every thing which related to the internal affairs of America, Congress went no farther than to issue recommendations to the several provincial assemblies, who at discretion adopted them or not. Nothing on the part of Congress was compulsive; yet, in this situation, it was more faithfully and affectionately obeyed, than was any government in Europe. This instance, like that of the National Assembly of France, sufficiently shows, that the strength of government does not consist in any thing *within* itself, but in the attachment of a nation, and the interest which the people feel in supporting it. When this is lost, government is but a child in power;

and though, like the old government of France, it may harrass individuals for a while, it but facilitates its own fall.

After the declaration of independence, it became consistent with the principle on which representative government is founded, that the authority of Congress should be defined and established. Whether that authority should be more or less than Congress then discretionally exercised, was not the question. It was merely the rectitude of the measure.

For this purpose, the act, called the act of confederation, (which was a sort of imperfect federal constitution), was proposed, and, after long deliberation, was concluded in the year 1781. It was not the act of Congress, because it is repugnant to the principles of representative government that a body should give power to itself. Congress first informed the several states of the powers which it conceived were necessary to be invested in the union, to enable it to perform the duties and services required from it; and the states severally agreed with each other, and concentrated in Congress those powers.

It may not be improper to observe, that in both those instances (the one of Pennsylvania, and the other of the United States), there is no such thing as the idea of a compact between the people on one side, and the government on the other. The compact was that of the people with each other, to produce and constitute a government. To suppose that any government can be a party in a compact with the whole people, is to suppose it to have existence before it can have a right to exist. The only instance in which a compact can take place between the people and those who exercise the government, is, that the people shall pay them, while they choose to employ them.

Government is not a trade which any man or body of men has a right to set up and exercise for his own emolu-

ment, but is altogether a trust, in right of those by whom that trust is delegated, and by whom it is always resumable. It has of itself no rights ; they are altogether duties.

Having thus given two instances of the original formation of a constitution, I will show the manner in which both have been changed since their first establishment.

The powers vested in the governments of the several states, by the state constitutions, were found, upon experience, to be too great ; and those vested in the federal government, by the act of confederation, too little. The defect was not in the principle, but in the distribution of power.

Numerous publications, in pamphlets and in the newspapers, appeared on the propriety and necessity of new modelling the federal government. After some time of public discussion, carried on through the channel of the press, and in conversations, the state of Virginia, experiencing some inconvenience with respect to commerce, proposed holding a continental conference ; in consequence of which, a deputation from five or six of the state assemblies met at Annapolis in Maryland, in 1786. This meeting, not conceiving itself sufficiently authorized to go into the business of a reform, did no more than state their general opinions of the propriety of the measure, and recommend that a convention of all the states should be held the year following.

This convention met at Philadelphia in May, 1787, of which General Washington was elected president. He was not at that time connected with any of the state governments, or with congress. He delivered up his commission when the war ended, and since then had lived a private citizen.

The convention went deeply into all the subjects ; and having, after a variety of debate and investigation, agreed among themselves upon the several parts of a federal con-

stitution, the next question was, the manner of giving it authority and practice.

For this purpose, they did not, like a cabal of courtiers, send for a Dutch Stadtholder, or a German Elector; but they referred the whole matter to the sense and interest of the country.

They first directed, that the proposed constitution should be published. Secondly, that each state should elect a convention, expressly for the purpose of taking it into consideration, and of ratifying or rejecting it; and that as soon as the approbation and ratification of any nine states should be given, that those states should proceed to the election of their proportion of members to the new federal government; and that the operation of it should then begin, and the former federal government cease.

The several states proceeded accordingly to elect their conventions. Some of those conventions ratified the constitution by very large majorities, and two or three unanimously. In others there were much debate and division of opinion. In the Massachusetts convention, which met at Boston, the majority was not above nineteen or twenty, in about three hundred members; but such is the nature of representative government, that it quietly decides all matters by majority. After the debate in the Massachusetts convention was closed, and the vote taken, the objecting members rose, and declared, "*That though they had argued and voted against it, because certain parts appeared to them in a different light to what they appeared to other members: yet, as the vote had decided in favor of the constitution as proposed, they should give it the same practical support as if they had voted for it.*"

As soon as nine states had concurred, (and the rest followed in the order their conventions were elected,) the old fabric of the federal government was taken down,

and the new one elected, of which General Washington is President. In this place I cannot help remarking, that the character and services of this gentleman are sufficient to put all those men called kings to shame. While they are receiving from the sweat and labors of mankind, a prodigality of pay, to which neither their abilities nor their services can entitle them, he is rendering every service in his power, and refusing every pecuniary reward. He accepted no pay as Commander in Chief; he accepts none as President of the United States.

After the new federal constitution was established, the State of Pennsylvania, conceiving that some parts of its own constitution required to be altered, elected a convention for that purpose. The proposed alterations were published, and the people concurring therein, they were established.

In forming those constitutions, or in altering them, little or no inconvenience took place. The ordinary course of things was not interrupted, and the advantages have been much. It is always the interest of a far greater number of people in a nation to have things right, than to let them remain wrong; and when public matters are open to debate, and the public judgment free, it will not decide wrong, unless it decides too hastily.

In the two instances of changing the constitutions, the governments then in being were not actors either way. Government has no right to make itself a party in any debate respecting the principles or modes of forming, or of changing, constitutions. It is not for the benefit of those who exercise the powers of government, that constitutions, and the governments issuing from them, are established. In all those matters, the right of judging and acting are in those who pay, and not in those who receive.

A constitution is the property of a nation, and not of those who exercise the government. All the constitu-

tions of America are declared to be established on the authority of the people. In France, the word nation is used instead of the people; but in both cases, a constitution is a thing antecedent to the government, and always distinct therefrom.

In England, it is not difficult to perceive that every thing has a constitution, except the nation. Every society and association that is established, first agreed upon a number of original articles, digested into form, which are its constitution. It then appointed its officers, whose powers and authorities are described in that constitution, and the government of that society then commenced. Those officers, by whatever name they are called, have no authority to add to, alter, or abridge the original articles. It is only to the constituting power that this right belongs.

From the want of understanding the difference between a constitution and a government, Dr. Johnson, and all writers of his description, have always bewildered themselves. They could not but perceive, that there must necessarily be a *controlling* power existing somewhere, and they placed this power in the discretion of the persons exercising the government, instead of placing it in a constitution formed by the nation. When it is in a constitution, it has the nation for its support, and the natural and the controlling powers are together. The laws which are enacted by governments, control men only as individuals, but the nation, through its constitution, controls the whole government, and has a natural ability so to do. The final controlling power, therefore, and the original constituting power, are one and the same power.

Dr. Johnson could not have advanced such a position in any country where there was a constitution; and he is himself an evidence, that no such thing as a constitution exists in England. But it may be put as a question, not improper to be investigated, that if a constitution does

not exist, how came the idea of its existence so generally established?

In order to decide this question, it is necessary to consider a constitution in both cases: — First, as creating a government and giving it powers. Secondly, as regulating and restraining the powers so given.

If we begin with William of Normandy, we find that the government of England was originally a tyranny, founded on an invasion and conquest of the country. This being admitted, it will then appear, that the exertion of the nation, at different periods, to abate that tyranny, and render it less intolerable, has been credited for a constitution.

Magna Charta, as it was called, (it is now like an almanac of the same date,) was no more than compelling the government to renounce a part of its assumptions. It did not create and give powers to government in the manner a constitution does; but was, as far as it went, of the nature of a re-conquest, and not of a constitution; for could the nation have totally expelled the usurpation, as France has done its despotism, it would then have had a constitution to form.

The history of the Edwards and the Henries, and up to the commencement of the Stuarts, exhibits as many instances of tyranny as could be acted within the limits to which the nation had restricted it. The Stuarts endeavored to pass those limits, and their fate is well known. In all those instances we see nothing of a constitution, but only of restrictions on assumed power.

After this, another William, descended from the same stock, and claiming from the same origin, gained possession; and of the two evils, James and William, the nation preferred what it thought the least; since, from the circumstances, it must take one. The act, called the Bill of Rights, comes here into view. What is it but a bargain, which the parts of government made with

each other to divide powers, profits and privileges? You shall have so much, and I will have the rest; and with respect to the nation, it said, for *your share*, YOU *shall have the right of petitioning*. This being the case, the bill of rights is more properly a bill of wrongs, and of insult. As to what is called the convention-parliament, it was a thing that made itself, and then made the authority by which it acted. A few persons got together, and called themselves by that name. Several of them had never been elected, and none of them for that purpose.

From the time of William, a species of government arose, issuing out of this coalition bill of rights; and more so, since the corruption introduced at the Hanover succession, by the agency of Walpole: that can be described by no other name than a despotic legislation. Though the parts may embarrass each other, the whole has no bounds; and the only right it acknowledges out of itself, is the right of petitioning. Where then is the constitution that either gives or restrains power?

It is not because a part of the government is elective, that makes it less a despotism, if the persons so elected, possess afterwards, as a parliament, unlimited powers. Election, in this case, becomes separated from representation, and the candidates are candidates for despotism.

I cannot believe that any nation, reasoning on its own rights, would have thought of calling those things *a constitution*, if the cry of constitution had not been set up by the government. It has got into circulation like the words *bore* and *quoz*, by being chalked up in the speeches of parliament, as those words were on the window-shutters and door-posts; but whatever the constitution may be in other respects, it has undoubtedly been *the most productive machine for taxation that was ever invented.* The taxes in France under the new constitution, are not

quite thirteen shillings per head,* and the taxes in England, under what is called its present constitution, are forty-eight shillings and sixpence per head, men, women, and children, amounting to nearly seventeen millions sterling, besides the expense of collection, which is upwards of a million more.

In a country like England, where the whole of the civil government is executed by the people of every town and country, by means of parish officers, magistrates, quarterly sessions, juries, and assize, without any trouble to what is called government, or any other expense to the revenue than the salary of the judges, it is astonishing how such a mass of taxes can be employed. Not even the internal defence of the country is paid out of the revenue. On all occasions, whether real or contrived, recourse is continually had to new loans and new taxes. No wonder, then, that a machine of government so advantageous to the advocates of a court, should be so triumphantly extolled! No wonder, that St. James's or St. Stephen's should echo with the continual cry of constitution! No wonder, that the French Revolution should be reprobated, and the *res-publica* treated with reproach! The *red book* of England, like the red book of France will explain the reason.†

I will now, by way of relaxation, turn a thought or two to Mr. Burke. I ask his pardon for neglecting him so long.

"America," says he, (in his speech on the Canada con-

*The whole amount of the assessed taxes of France, for the present year, is three hundred millions of francs, which is twelve millions and a half sterling; and the incidental taxes are estimated at three millions, making in the whole fifteen millions and a half; which among twenty-four millions of people, is not quite thirty shillings per head. France has lessened her taxes since the revolution, nearly nine millions sterling annually. Before the revolution, the city of Paris paid a duty of upwards of thirty per cent. on all articles brought into the city. This tax was collected at the city gates. It was taken off on the first of last May, and the gates taken down.

†What was called the *livre rouge*, or the red book, in France, was not exactly similar to the court calendar in England; but it sufficiently showed how a great part of the taxes were lavished.

stitution bill) "never dreamed of such absurd doctrine as the *Rights of Man.*"

Mr. Burke is such a bold presumer, and advances his assertions and his premises with such a deficiency of judgment, that, without troubling ourselves about principles of philosophy or politics, the mere logical conclusions they produce, are ridiculous. For instance:

If governments, as Mr. Burke asserts, are not founded on the *rights of man*, and are founded on *any rights* at all, they consequently must be founded on the rights of *something* that is *not man.* What then is that something?

Generally speaking, we know of no other creatures that inhabit the earth than man and beast; and in all cases, where only two things offer themselves, and one must be admitted, a negation proved on any one, amounts to an affirmative on the other; and therefore, Mr. Burke, by proving against the rights of *man*, proves in behalf of the *beast;* and consequently proves that government is a beast; and as difficult things sometimes explain each other, we now see the origin of keeping wild beasts in the Tower; for they certainly can be of no other use than to show the origin of the government. They are in the place of a constitution. O! John Bull, what honors thou hast lost by not being a wild beast. Thou mightest, on Mr. Burke's system, have been in the Tower for life.

If Mr. Burke's arguments have not weight enough to keep one serious, the fault is less mine than his; and as I am willing to make an apology to the reader for the liberty I have taken, I hope Mr. Burke will also make his for giving the cause.

Having thus paid Mr. Burke the compliment of remembering him, I return to the subject.

From the want of a constitution in England to restrain

and regulate the wild impulse of power, many of the laws are irrational and tyrannical, and the administration of them vague and problematical.

The attention of the government of England (for I rather choose to call it by this name, than the English government) appears, since its political connection with Germany, to have been so completely engrossed and absorbed by foreign affairs, and the means of raising taxes, that it seems to exist for no other purposes. Domestic concerns are neglected; and with respect to regular law, there is scarcely such a thing.

Almost every case must now be determined by some precedent, be that precedent good or bad, or whether it properly applies or not; and the practice has become so general, as to suggest a suspicion, that it proceeds from a deeper policy than at first sight appears.

Since the revolution of America, and more so since that of France, this preaching up the doctrine of precedents, dawn from times and circumstances antecedent to those events, has been the studied practice of the English government. The generality of those precedents are founded on principles and opinions, the reverse of what they ought to be; and the greater distance of time they are drawn from, the more they are to be suspected.

But by associating those precedents with a superstitious reverence for ancient things, as monks show relics and call them holy, the generality of mankind are deceived into the design. Governments now act as if they were afraid to awaken a single reflection in man. They are softly leading him to the sepulchre of precedents, to deaden his faculties and call his attention from the scene of revolutions. They feel that he is arriving at knowledge faster than they wish, and their policy of precedents is the barometer of their fears. This political popery, like the ecclesiastical popery of old, has had its day, and

is hastening to its exit. The ragged relic and the antiquated precedent, the monk and the monarch, will moulder together.

Government by precedent, without any regard to the principle of the precedent, is one of the vilest systems that can be set up. In numerous instances, the precedent ought to operate as a warning, and not as an example, and requires to be shunned instead of imitated; but instead of this, precedents are taken in the lump, and put at once for constitution and for law.

Either the doctrine of precedents is policy to keep a man in a state of ignorance, or it is a practical confession that wisdom degenerates in governments as governments increase in age, and can only hobble along by the stilts and crutches of precedents. How is it that the same persons who would proudly be thought wiser than their predecessors, appear at the same time only as the ghosts of departed wisdom? How strangely is antiquity treated! To answer some purposes, it is spoken of as the times of darkness and ignorance, and to answer others, it is put for the light of the world.

If the doctrine of precedents is to be followed, the expenses of government need not continue the same. Why pay men extravagantly, who have but little to do? If every thing that can happen is already in precedent, legislation is at an end, and precedent, like a dictionary, determines every case. Either, therefore, government has arrived at its dotage, and requires to be renovated, or all the occasions for exercising its wisdom have occurred.

We now see all over Europe, and particularly in England, the curious phenomenon of a nation looking one way, and the government the other—the one forward and the other backward. If governments are to go on by precedent, while nations go on by improvement, they must at last come to a final separation; and the sooner,

and the more civilly they determine this point, the better it will be for them.*

Having thus spoken of constitutions generally, as things distinct from actual governments, let us proceed to consider the parts of which a constitution is composed.

Opinions differ more on this subject, than with respect to the whole. That a nation ought to have a constitution, as a rule for the conduct of its government, is a simple question in which all men, not directly courtiers will agree. It is only on the component parts that questions and opinions multiply.

But this difficulty, like every other, will diminish when put into a train of being rightly understood.

The first thing is, that a nation has a right to establish a constitution.

Whether it exercises this right in the most judicious manner at first, it is quite another case. It exercises it agreeably to the judgment it possesses; and by continuing to do so, all errors will at last be exploded.

When this right is established in a nation, there is no fear that it will be employed to its own injury. A nation can have no interest in being wrong.

Though all the constitutions of America are on one general principle, yet no two of them are exactly alike in their component parts, or in the distribution of the powers which they give to the actual governments. Some are more and others less complex.

In forming a constitution, it is first necessary to consider what are the ends for which government is necessary:

*In England the improvements in agriculture, useful arts, manufactures, and commerce have been made in opposition to the genius of its government, which is that of following precedents. It is from the enterprize and industry of the individuals, and their numerous associations, in which, tritely speaking, government is neither pillow nor bolster, that these improvements have proceeded. No man thought about the government, or who was *in*, or who was *out*, when he was planning or executing those things, and all he had to hope, with respect to government, was, that it would let him alone. Three or four very silly ministerial newspapers are continually offending against the spirit of national improvement, by ascribing it to a minister. They may with as much truth ascribe this book to a minister.

secondly, what are the best means, and the least expensive, for accomplishing those ends.

Government is nothing more than a national association; and the object of this association is the good of all, as well individually as collectively. Every man wishes to pursue his occupation, and to enjoy the fruits of his labors, and the produce of his property, in peace and safety, and with the least possible expense. When these things are accomplished, all the objects for which government ought to be established are answered.

It has been customary to consider government under three distinct general heads: The legislative, the executive, and the judicial.

But if we permit our judgment to act unincumbered by the habit of multiplied terms, we can perceive no more than two divisions of power, of which civil government is composed, namely, that of legislating, or enacting laws, and that of executing or administering them. Every thing, therefore, appertaining to civil government, classes itself under one or other of these two divisions.

So far as regards the execution of the laws, that which is called the judicial power, is strictly and properly the executive power of every country. It is that power to which every individual has an appeal, and which causes the laws to be executed; neither have we any other clear idea with respect to the official execution of the laws. In England, and also in America and France, this power begins with the magistrate, and proceeds up through all the courts of judicature.

I leave to courtiers to explain what it meant by calling monarchy the executive power. It is merely a name in which acts of government are done; and any other, or none at all, would answer the same purpose. Laws have neither more nor less authority on this account. It must be from the justness of their principles, and the interest which a nation feels therein, that they derive support;

if they require any other than this, it is a sign that something in the system of government is imperfect. Laws difficult to be executed cannot be generally good.

With respect to the organization of the *legislative power*, different modes have been adopted in different countries. In America it is generally composed of two houses. In France it consists but of one, but in both countries, it is wholly by representation.

The case is, that mankind (from the long tyranny of assumed power) have had so few opportunities of making the necessary trials on modes and principles of government, in order to discover the best, *that government is but now beginning to be known*, and experience is yet wanting to determine many particulars.

The objections against two houses are, first, that there is an inconsistency in any part of a whole legislature coming to a final determination by vote on any matter, whilst *that matter*, with respect to *that whole*, is yet only in a train of deliberation, and consequently open to new illustrations.

Secondly, That by taking the vote on each, as a separate body, it always admits of the possibility, and is often the case in practice, that the minority governs the majority, and that, in some instances, to a great degree of inconsistency.

Thirdly, That two houses arbitrarily checking or controlling each other, is inconsistent; because it cannot be proved, on the principles of just representation, that either should be wiser or better than the other. They may check in the wrong as well as in the right; and therefore, to give the power where we cannot give the wisdom to use it, nor be assured of its being rightly used, renders the hazard at least equal to the precaution.*

*With respect to the two houses, of which the English Parliament is composed, they appear to be effectually influenced into one, and, as a legislature, to have no temper of its own. The minister, whoever he at any time may be, touches it as with an opium wand, and it sleeps obedience.

But if we look at the distinct abilities of the two houses, the difference will appear

The objection against a single house is, that it is always in a condition of committing itself too soon. But it should at the same time be remembered that when there is a constitution which defines the power, and establishes the principles within which a legislature shall act, there is already a more effectual check provided, and more powerfully operating, than any other check can be. For example:

Were a bill brought into any of the American legislatures, similar to that which was passed into an act by the English parliament, at the commencement of the reign of George I., to extend the duration of the assemblies to a longer period than they now sit, the check is in the constitution, which in effect says, *thus far shalt thou go and no further.*

But in order to remove the objection against a single house, (that of acting with too quick an impulse) and at the same time to avoid the inconsistencies, in some cases absurdities, arising from the two houses, the following method has been proposed as an improvement on both.

First: To have but one representation.

Secondly: To divide that representation, by lot, into two or three parts.

Thirdly: That every proposed bill shall first be debated in those parts, by succession, that they may become hearers of each other, but without taking any vote. After which the whole representation to assemble. for a general debate and determination, by vote.

so great, as to show the inconsistency of placing power where there can be no certainty of the judgment to use it. Wretched as the state of representation is in England, it is manhood compared with what is called the House of Lords; and so little is this nick-named house regarded, that the people scarcely inquire at any time what it is doing. It appears also to be most under influence, and the furthest removed from the general interest of the nation. In the debate on engaging in the Russian and Turkish war, the majority in the House of Peers in favor of it was upwards of ninety, when in the other house, which was more than double its numbers, the majority was sixty-three.

The proceedings on Mr. Fox's bill, respecting the rights of juries, merits also to be noticed. The persons called the peers, were not the objects of that bill. They are already in possession of more privileges than that bill gave to others. They are their own jury, and if any one of that house were prosecuted for a libel, he would not suffer, even upon conviction, for the first offence. Such inequality in laws ought not to exist in any country. The French constitution says, that *the law is the same to every individual, whether to protect or to punish. All are equal in its sight.*

To this proposed improvement has been added another, for the purpose of keeping the representation in a state of constant renovation; which is, that one-third of the representation of each county, shall go out at the expiration of one year, and the number be replaced by new elections. Another third at the expiration of the second year, replaced in like manner, and every third year to be a general election.*

But in whatever manner the separate parts of a constitution may be arranged, there is one general principle that distinguishes freedom from slavery, which is, that all *hereditary government over a people is to them a species of slavery, and representative government is freedom.*

Considering government in the only light in which it should be considered, that of a NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, it ought to be so constructed as not to be disordered by any accident happening among the parts; and therefore, no extraordinary power, capable of producing such an effect, should be lodged in the hands of any individual. The death, sickness, absence, or defection of any one individual in a government, ought to be a matter of no more consequence, with respect to the nation, than if the same circumstance had taken place in a member of the English Parliament, or the French National Assembly.

Scarcely any thing presents a more degrading character of national greatness, than its being thrown into confusion by any thing happening to, or acted by an individual; and the ridiculousness of the scene is often increased by the natural insignificance of the person by whom it is occasioned. Were a government so constructed, that it could not go on unless a goose or a gander were present in the senate, the difficulties would be just as great and as real on the flight or sickness of the

*As to the state of representation in England, it is too absurd to be reasoned upon. Almost all the represented parts are decreasing in population, and the unrepresented parts are increasing. A general convention of the nation is necessary to take the whole state of its government into consideration.

goose or the gander, as if they were called a king. We laugh at individuals for the silly difficulties they make to themselves, without perceiving that the greatest of all ridiculous things are acted in governments.*

All the constitutions of America are on a plan that excludes the childish embarrassments which occur in monarchical countries. No suspension of government can there take place for a moment, from any circumstance whatever. The system of representation provides for every thing, and is the only system in which nations and governments can always appear in their proper character.

As extraordinary power ought not to be lodged in the hands of any individual, so ought there to be no appropriations of public money to any person beyond what his services in a state may be worth. It signifies not whether a man be called a president, a king, an emperor, a senator, or by any other name, which propriety or folly may devise, or arrogance assume; it is only a certain service he can perform in the state; and the service of any such individual in the routine of office, whether such office be called monarchical, presidential, senatorial, or by any other name or title, can never exceed the value of ten thousand pounds a year. All the great services that are done in the world are performed by volunteer characters, who accept no pay for them; but the routine of office is always regulated to such a general standard of abilities as to be within the compass of numbers in every country to

* It is related, that in the canton of Berne, in Switzerland, it had been customary from time immemorial, to keep a bear at the public expense, and the people had been taught to believe, that if they had not a bear, they should all be undone. It happened some years ago, that the bear, then in being, was taken sick, and died too suddenly to have his place immediately supplied with another. During the interregnum the people discovered, that the corn grew and the vintage flourished, and the sun and moon continued to rise and set, and every thing went on the same as before, and, taking courage from these circumstances, they resolved not to keep any more bears: for, said they, "a bear is a very voracious, expensive animal, and we were obliged to pull out his claws, lest he should hurt the citizens."

The story of the bear of Berne was related in some of the French newspapers, at the time of the flight of Louis XVI. and the application of it to monarchy could not be mistaken in France; but it seems that the aristocracy of Berne applied it to themselves, and have since prohibited the reading of French newspapers.

perform, and therefore cannot merit very extraordinary recompense. "*Government*," says Swift, "*is a plain thing, and fitted to the capacity of many heads*."

It is inhuman to talk of a million sterling a year, paid out of the public taxes of any country, for the support of any individual, whilst thousands, who are forced to contribute thereto, are pining with want, and struggling with misery. Government does not consist in a contrast between prisons and palaces, between poverty and pomp; it is not instituted to rob the needy of his mite, and increase the wretchedness of the wretched. But of this part of the subject I shall speak hereafter, and confine myself at present to political observations.

When extraordinary power and extraordinary pay are allotted to any individual in a government, he becomes the centre, round which every kind of corruption generates and forms. Give to any man a million a year, and add thereto the power of creating and disposing of places, at the expense of a country, and the liberties of that country are no longer secure. What is called the splendor of a throne, is no other than the corruption of the state. It is made up of a band of parasites, living in luxurious indolence, out of the public taxes.

When once such a vicious system is established, it becomes the guard and protection of all inferior abuses. The man who is in the receipt of a million a year is the last person to promote a spirit of reform, lest, in the event, it should reach to himself. It is always his interest to defend inferior abuses, as so many outworks to protect the citadel, and in this species of political fortification, all the parts have such a common dependence, that it is never to be expected they will attack each other.*

*It is scarcely possible to touch on any subject, that will not suggest an allusion to some corruption in governments. The simile of "*fortifications*," unfortunately involves with it a circumstance, which is directly in point with the matter alluded to.

Among the numerous instances of abuse which have been acted or protected by

Monarchy would not have continued so many ages in the world, had it not been for the abuses it protects. It is the master fraud which shelters all others. By admitting a participation of the spoil, it makes itself friends; and when it ceases to do this, it will cease to be the idol of courtiers.

As the principle on which constitutions are now formed, rejects all hereditary pretensions to government, it also rejects all that catalogue of assumptions known by the name of prerogatives.

If there is any government where prerogatives might with apparent safety be intrusted to any individual, it is in the federal government of America. The President of the United States of America is elected only for four years. He is not only responsible in the general sense of the word, but a particular mode is laid down in the constitution for trying him. He cannot be elected under thirty-five years of age; and he must be a native of the country.

In a comparison of these cases with the government of England, the difference when applied to the latter amounts to an absurdity. In England, the person who exercises this prerogative is often a foreigner; always half a foreigner, and always married to a foreigner. He is never in full natural or political connection with the country, is not responsible for any thing, and becomes of

governments, ancient or modern, there is not a greater than that of quartering a man and his heirs upon the public, to be maintained at its expense.

Humanity dictates a provision for the poor; but by what right, moral or political, does any government assume to say, that the person called the Duke of Richmond, shall be maintained by the public? Yet, if common report is true, not a beggar in London can purchase his wretched pittance of coal, without paying towards the civil list of the Duke of Richmond. Were the whole produce of this imposition but a shilling a year, the iniquitous principle would be still the same; but when it amounts, as it is said to do, to not less than twenty thousand pounds per annum, the enormity is too serious to be permitted to remain. This is one of the effects of monarchy and aristocracy.

In stating this case, I am led by no personal dislike. Though I think it mean in any man to live upon the public; the vice originates in the government; and so general is it become, that whether the parties are in the ministry or in the opposition, it makes no difference; they are sure of the guaranty of each other.

age at eighteen years; yet such a person is permitted to form foreign alliances, without even the knowledge of the nation; and to make war and peace without its consent.

But this is not all. Though such a person cannot dispose of the government, in the manner of a testator, he dictates the marriage connections, which, in effect, accomplishes a great part of the same end. He cannot directly bequeath half the government to Prussia, but he can form a marriage partnership that will produce the same effect. Under such circumstances, it is happy for England that she is not situated on the continent, or she might, like Holland, fall under the dictatorship of Prussia. Holland, by marriage, is as effectually governed by Prussia, as if the old tyranny of bequeathing the government had been the means.

The presidency in America, (or, as it is sometimes called, the executive,) is the only office from which a foreigner is excluded; and in England, it is the only one to which he is admitted. A foreigner cannot be a member of Parliament, but he may be what is called a King. If there is any reason for excluding foreigners, it ought to be from those offices where most mischief can be acted, and where, by uniting every bias of interest and attachment, the trust is best secured.

But as nations proceed in the great business of forming constitutions, they will examine with more precision into the nature and business of that department which is called the executive. What the legislative and judicial departments are, every one can see; but with respect to what, in Europe, is called the executive, as distinct from those two, it is either a political superfluity, or a chaos of unknown things.

Some kind of official department, to which reports shall be made from different parts of the nation, or from abroad, to be laid before the national representatives, is

all that is necessary; but there is no consistency in calling this the executive; neither can it be considered in any other light than as inferior to the legislature. The sovereign authority in any country is the power of making laws, and every thing else is an official department.

Next to the arrangement of the principles and the organization of the several parts of a constitution, is the provision to be made for the support of the persons to whom the nation shall confide the administration of the constitutional powers.

A nation can have no right to the time and services of any person at his own expense, whom it may choose to employ or intrust in any department whatever; neither can any reason be given for making provision for the support of any one part of the government and not for the other.

But, admitting that the honor of being intrusted with any part of a government, is to be considered a sufficient reward, it ought to be so to every person alike. If the members of the legislature of any country are to serve at their own expense, that which is called the executive, whether monarchical, or by any other name, ought to serve in like manner. It is inconsistent to pay the one, and accept the service of the other gratis.

In America, every department in the government is decently provided for; but no one is extravagantly paid. Every member of Congress, and of the State Assemblies, is allowed a sufficiency for his expenses. Whereas, in England, a most prodigal provision is made for the support of one part of the government, and none for the other; the consequence of which is, that the one is furnished with the means of corruption, and the other is put into the condition of being corrupted. Less than a fourth part of such expense, applied as it is in America, would remedy a great part of the corruption.

Another reform in the American constitution is the exploding all oaths of personality. The oath of allegiance is to the nation only. The putting any individual as a figure for a nation is improper. The happiness of a nation is the first object, and therefore the intention of an oath of allegiance ought not to be obscured by being figuratively taken, to, or in the name of, any person. The oath, called the civic oath, in France, *viz.* the "*nation, the law, and the king*," is improper. If taken at all, it ought to be as in America, to the nation only.

The law may or may not be good; but, in this place, it can have no other meaning, than as being conducive to the happiness of the nation, and therefore is included in it. The remainder of the oath is improper, on the ground that all personal oaths ought to be abolished. They are the remains of tyranny on one part, and slavery on the other; and the name of the Creator ought not to be introduced to witness the degradation of his creation; or if taken, as is already mentioned, as figurative of the nation, it is in this place redundant. But whatever apology may be made for oaths at the first establishment of a government, they ought not to be permitted afterwards. If a government requires the support of oaths, it is a sign that it is not worth supporting, and ought not to be supported. Make government what it ought to be, and it will support itself.

To conclude this part of the subject:—One of the greatest improvements that has been made for the perpetual security and progress of constitutional liberty, is the provision which the new constitutions make for occasionally revising, altering and amending them.

The principle upon which Mr. Burke formed his political creed, that "*of binding and controlling posterity to the end of time, and renouncing and abdicating the rights of all posterity for ever*," is now become too detestable to

be made a subject of debate; and, therefore, I pass it over with no other notice than exposing it.

Government is but now beginning to be known. Hitherto it has been the mere exercise of power, which forbade all effectual inquiry into rights, and grounded itself wholly on possession. While the enemy of liberty was its judge, the progress of its principles must have been small indeed.

The constitutions of America, and also that of France, have either fixed a period for their revision, or laid down the mode by which improvements shall be made. It is perhaps impossible to establish any thing that combines principles with opinions and practice, which the progress of circumstances, through a length of years, will not in some measure derange, or render inconsistent; and therefore, to prevent inconveniences accumulating, till they discourage reformations or provoke revolutions, it is best to regulate them as they occur. The rights of man are the rights of all generations of men, and cannot be monopolized by any. That which is worth following, will be followed for the sake of its worth; and it is in this that its security lies, and not in any conditions with which it may be incumbered. When a man leaves property to his heirs, he does not connect it with an obligation that they shall accept it. Why then should we do otherwise with respect to constitutions?

The best constitution that could now be devised, consistent with the condition of the present moment, may be far short of that excellence which a few years may afford. There is a morning of reason rising upon man, on the subject of government, that has not appeared before. As the barbarism of the present old governments expires, the moral condition of the nations, with respect to each other, will be changed. Man will not be brought up with the savage idea of considering his species as enemies, because the accident of birth gave the individuals exist-

ence in countries distinguished by different names; and as constitutions have always some relation to external as well as to domestic circumstances, the means of benefiting by every change, foreign or domestic, should be a part of every constitution.

We already see an alteration in the national disposition of England and France towards each other, which, when we look back only a few years, is itself a revolution. Who could have foreseen, or who would have believed, that a French National Assembly would ever have been a popular toast in England, or that a friendly alliance of the two nations should become the wish of either? It shows, that man, were he not corrupted by governments, is naturally the friend of man, and that human nature is not of itself vicious. That spirit of jealousy and ferocity, which the governments of the two countries inspired, and which they rendered subservient to the purpose of taxation, is now yielding to the dictates of reason, interest, and humanity. The trade of courts is beginning to be understood, and the affectation of mystery, with all the artificial sorcery by which they imposed upon mankind, is on the decline. It has received its death wound; and though it may linger, it will expire.

Government ought to be as much open to improvement as any thing which appertains to man, instead of which it has been monopolized from age to age, by the most ignorant and vicious of the human race. Need we any other proof of their wretched management, than the excess of debt and taxes with which every nation groans, and the quarrels into which they have precipitated the world?

Just emerging from such a barbarous condition, it is too soon to determine to what extent of improvement government may yet be carried. For what we can foresee, all Europe may form but one great republic, and man be free of the whole.

CHAPTER V.

WAYS AND MEANS OF IMPROVING THE CONDITION OF EUROPE, INTERSPERSED WITH MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

IN contemplating a subject that embraces with equatorial magnitude the whole region of humanity, it is impossible to confine the pursuit in one single direction. It takes ground on every character and condition that appertains to man, and blends the individual, the nation, and the world.

From a small spark kindled in America, a flame has arisen not to be extinguished. Without consuming, like the *Ultima Ratio Regum*, it winds its progress from nation to nation, and conquers by a silent operation. Man finds himself changed, he scarcely perceives how. He acquires a knowledge of his rights by attending justly to his interest, and discovers in the event that the strength and powers of despotism consist wholly in the fear of resisting it, and that in order, "*to be free, it is sufficient that he wills it.*"

Having in all the preceding parts of this work endeavored to establish a system of principles as a basis on which governments ought to be erected, I shall proceed in this to the ways and means of rendering them into practice. But in order to introduce this part of the subject with more propriety and stronger effect, some preliminary observations, deducible from or connected with those principles, are necessary.

Whatever the form or constitution of government may be, it ought to have no other object than the *general*

happiness. When, instead of this, it operates to create and increase wretchedness in any of the parts of society, it is on a wrong system, and reformation is necessary.

Customary language has classed the condition of man under the two descriptions of civilized and uncivilized life. To the one it has ascribed felicity and affluence; to the other hardship and want. But, however our imagination may be impressed by painting and comparison, it is nevertheless true, that a great portion of mankind, in what are called civilized countries, are in a state of poverty and wretchedness, far below the condition of an Indian. I speak not of one country, but of all. It is so in England, it is so all over Europe. Let us inquire into the cause.

It lies not in any natural defect in the principles of civilization, but in preventing those principles having an universal operation; the consequence of which is a perpetual system of war and expense, that drains the country, and defeats the general felicity of which civilization is capable.

All the European governments (France now excepted) are constructed not on the principle of universal civilization, but on the reverse of it. So far as those governments relate to each other, they are in the same condition as we conceive of savage uncivilized life; they put themselves beyond the law as well of God as of man, and are, with respect to principle and reciprocal conduct, like so many individuals in a state of nature.

The inhabitants of every country, under the civilization of laws, easily associate together, but governments being yet in an uncivilized state, and almost continually at war, they pervert the abundance which civilized life produces to carry on the uncivilized part to a greater extent. By thus engrafting the barbarism of government upon the internal civilization of a country, it draws from the latter, and more especially from the poor, a great

portion of those earnings which should be applied to their own subsistence and comfort. Apart from all reflections of morality and philosophy it is a melancholy fact, that more than one-fourth of the labor of mankind is annually consumed by this barbarous system.

What has served to continue this evil, is the pecuniary advantage which all the governments of Europe have found in keeping up this state of uncivilization. It affords to them pretences for power and revenue, for which there would be neither occasion nor apology, if the circle of civilization were rendered complete. Civil government alone, or the government of laws, is not productive of pretences for many taxes ; it operates at home, directly under the eye of the country, and precludes the possibility of much imposition. But when the scene is laid in the uncivilized contention of governments, the field of pretences is enlarged, and the country, being no longer a judge, is open to every imposition, which governments please to act.

Not a thirtieth, scarcely a fortieth, part of the taxes which are raised in England are either occasioned by, or applied, to the purposes of civil government. It is not difficult to see, that the whole which the actual government does in this respect, is to enact laws, and that the country administers and executes them, at its own expense, by means of magistrates, juries, sessions, and assize, over and above the taxes which it pays.

In this view of the case, we have two distinct characters of government ; the one, the civil government, or the government of laws, which operates at home ; the other, the court or cabinet government, which operates abroad, on the rude plan of uncivilized life ; the one attended with little charge, the other with boundless extravagance ; and so distinct are the two, that if the latter were to sink, as it were, by a sudden opening of the earth, and totally disappear, the former would not be deranged. It

would still proceed, because it is the common interest of the nation that it should, and all the means are in practice.

Revolutions, then, have for their object, a change in the moral condition of governments, and with this change the burden of public taxes will lessen, and civilization will be left to the enjoyment of that abundance, of which it is now deprived.

In contemplating the whole of this subject, I extend my views into the department of commerce. In all my publications, where the matter would admit, I have been an advocate for commerce, because I am a friend to its effects. It is a pacific system, operating to unite mankind by rendering nations, as well as individuals, useful to each other. As to the mere theoretical reformation, I have never preached it up. The most effectual process is that of improving the condition of man by means of his interest; and it is on this ground that I take my stand.

If commerce were permitted to act to the universal extent it is capable of, it would extirpate the system of war, and produce a revolution in the uncivilized state of governments. The invention of commerce has arisen since those governments began, and is the greatest approach towards universal civilization, that has yet been made by any means not immediately flowing from moral principles.

Whatever has a tendency to promote the civil intercourse of nations, by an exchange of benefits, is a subject as worthy of philosophy as of politics. Commerce is no other than the traffic of two individuals, multiplied on a scale of numbers; and by the same rule that nature intended the intercourse of two, she intended that of all. For this purpose she has distributed the materials of manufacturers and commerce, in various and distant parts of a nation and of the world; and as they cannot

be procured by war so cheaply or so commodiously as by commerce, she has rendered the latter the means of extirpating the former.

As the two are nearly the opposites of each other, consequently, the uncivilized state of European governments is injurious to commerce. Every kind of destruction or embarrassment serves to lessen the quantity, and it matters but little in what part of the commercial world the reduction begins. Like blood, it cannot be taken from any of the parts without being taken from the whole mass in circulation, and all partake of the loss. When the ability in any nation to buy is destroyed, it equally involves the seller. Could the government of England destroy the commerce of all other nations, she would most effectually ruin her own.

It is possible that a nation may be the carrier for the world, but she cannot be the merchant. She cannot be the seller and the buyer of her own merchandise. The ability to buy must reside out of herself; and, therefore, the prosperity of any commercial nation is regulated by the prosperity of the rest. If they are poor, she cannot be rich; and her condition, be it what it may, is an index of the height of the commercial tide in other nations.

That the principles of commerce, and its universal operation may be understood, without understanding the practice, is a position that reason will not deny; and it is on this ground only that I argue the subject. It is one thing in the counting house, in the world it is another. With respect to its operation, it must necessarily be contemplated as a reciprocal thing, that only one-half its powers resides within the nation, and that the whole is as effectually destroyed by destroying the half that resides without, as if the destruction had been committed on that which is within, for neither can act without the other.

When in the last, as well as in the former wars, the

commerce of England sunk, it was because the general quantity was lessened every where; and it now rises because commerce is in a rising state in every nation. If England, at this day, imports or exports more than at any former period, the nations with which she trades must necessarily do the same; her imports are their exports, and *vice versa*.

There can be no such thing as a nation flourishing alone in commerce; she can only participate; and the destruction of it in any part must necessarily affect all. When, therefore, governments are at war, the attack is made upon the common stock of commerce, and the consequence is the same as if each had attacked his own.

The present increase of commerce is not to be attributed to ministers, or to any political contrivances, but to its own natural operations in consequence of peace. The regular markets have been destroyed, the channels of trade broken up, the high road of the seas infested with robbers of every nation, and the attention of the world called to other objects. Those interruptions have ceased, and peace has restored the deranged condition of things to their proper order.*

It is worth remarking, that every nation reckons the balance of trade in its own favor; and therefore something must be irregular in the common ideas upon this subject.

The fact, however, is true, according to what is called a balance; and it is from this cause that commerce is universally supported. Every nation feels the advantage, or it would abandon the practice: but the deception lies in the mode of making up the accounts, and attributing what are called profits to a wrong cause.

*In America the increase of commerce is greater in proportion than in England. It is, at this time, at least one-half more than at any period prior to the revolution. The greatest number of vessels cleared out of the port of Philadelphia, before the commencement of the war, was between eight and nine hundred. In the year 1788, the number was upwards of twelve hundred. As the state of Pennsylvania is estimated as an eighth part of the United States in population, the whole number of vessels must now be nearly ten thousand.

Mr. Pitt has sometimes amused himself, by showing what he called a balance of trade from the custom-house books. This mode of calculation, not only affords no rule that is true, but one that is false.

In the first place, every cargo that departs from the custom-house, appears on the books as an export; and according to the custom-house balance, the losses at sea, and by foreign failures, are all reckoned on the side of profit, because they appear as exports.

Secondly, Because the importation by the smuggling trade does not appear on the custom-house books to arrange against the exports.

No balance, therefore, as applying to superior advantages, can be drawn from these documents; and if we examine the natural operation of commerce, the idea is fallacious; and if true, would soon be injurious. The great support of commerce consists in the balance being a level of benefits among all nations.

Two merchants of different nations trading together, will both become rich, and each makes the balance in his own favor; consequently, they do not get rich out of each other; and it is the same with respect to the nations in which they reside. The case must be, that each nation must get rich out of its own means, and increases that riches by something which it procures from another in exchange.

If a merchant in England sends an article of English manufacture abroad, which costs him a shilling at home, and imports something which sells for two, he makes a balance of one shilling in his own favor: but this is not gained out of the foreign nation, or the foreign merchant, for he also does the same by the article he receives, and neither has a balance of advantage upon the other. The original value of the two articles in their proper countries was but two shillings; but by changing their places, they acquire a new idea of value, equal to double what

they had at first, and that increased value is equally divided.

There is not otherwise a balance on foreign than on domestic commerce. The merchants of London and Newcastle trade on the same principle as if they resided in different nations, and make their balances in the same manner: yet London does not get rich out of Newcastle, any more than Newcastle out of London: but coals, the merchandize of Newcastle, have an additional value at London, and London merchandize has the same at Newcastle.

Though the principle of all commerce is the same, the domestic, in a national view, is the part the most beneficial; because the whole of the advantages, on both sides, rests within the nation; whereas, in foreign commerce, it is only a participation of one-half.

The most unprofitable of all commerce, is that connected with foreign dominion. To a few individuals it may be beneficial, merely because it is commerce; but to the nation it is a loss. The expense of maintaining dominion more than absorbs the profits of any trade. It does not increase the general quantity in the world, but operates to lessen it; and as a greater mass would be afloat by relinquishing dominion, the participation without the expense would be more valuable than a greater quantity with it.

But it is impossible to engross commerce by dominion; and therefore it is still more fallacious. It cannot exist in confined channels, and necessarily breaks out by regular or irregular means, that defeat the attempt, and to succeed would be still worse. France, since the revolution, has been more than indifferent as to foreign possessions; and other nations will become the same, when they investigate the subject with respect to commerce.

To the expense of dominion is to be added that of navies, and when the amount of the two is subtracted

from the profits of commerce, it will appear, that what is called the balance of trade, even admitting it to exist, is not enjoyed by the nation, but absorbed by the government.

The idea of having navies for the protection of commerce, is delusive. It is putting the means of destruction for the means of protection. Commerce needs no other protection than the reciprocal interest which every nation feels in supporting it—it is common stock—it exists by a balance of advantages to all; and the only interruption it meets, is from the present uncivilized state of governments, and which is its common interest to reform.*

Quitting this subject, I now proceed to other matters. As it is necessary to include England in the prospect of a general reformation, it is proper to inquire into the defects of its government. It is only by each nation reforming its own, that the whole can be improved, and the full benefit of reformation enjoyed. Only partial advantages can flow from partial reforms.

France and England are the only two countries in Europe where a reformation in government could have successfully begun. The one secure by the ocean, and the other by the immensity of its internal strength, could defy the malignancy of foreign despotism. But it is with revolutions as with commerce, the advantages increase by their becoming general, and double to either what each would receive alone.

As a new system is now opening to the view of the world, the European courts are plotting to counteract it. Alliances, contrary to all former systems, are agitating, and a common interest of courts is forming against the

* When I saw Mr. Pitt's mode of estimating the balance of trade, in one of his parliamentary speeches, he appeared to me to know nothing of the nature and interest of commerce; and no man has more wantonly tortured it than himself. During a period of peace, it has been shackled with the calamities of war. Three times has it been thrown into stagnation, and the vessels unmanned by impressing, within less than four years of peace.

common interest of man. This combination draws a line that runs throughout Europe, and presents a case so entirely new, as to exclude all calculations from former circumstances. While despotism warred with despotism, man had no interest in the contest; but in a cause that unites the soldier with the citizen, and nation with nation, the despotism of courts, though it feels the danger, and meditates revenge, is afraid to strike.

No question has arisen within the records of history that pressed with the importance of the present. It is not whether this or that party shall be in or out, or whig or tory, or high or low shall prevail; but whether man shall inherit his rights, and universal civilization take place? Whether the fruits of his labor shall be enjoyed by himself, or consumed by the profligacy of governments? Whether robbery shall be banished from courts, and wretchedness from countries?

When, in countries that are called civilized, we see age going to the work-house, and youth to the gallows, something must be wrong in the system of government. It would seem, by the exterior appearance of such countries, that all was happiness; but there lies hidden from the eye of common observation, a mass of wretchedness that has scarcely any other chance, than to expire in poverty or infamy. Its entrance into life is marked with the presage of its fate; and until this is remedied, it is in vain to punish.

Civil government does not consist in executions; but in making that provision for the instruction of youth, and the support of age, as to exclude, as much as possible, profligacy from the one, and despair from the other. Instead of this, the resources of a country are lavished upon kings, upon courts, upon hirelings, impostors and prostitutes; and even the poor themselves, with all their wants upon them, are compelled to support the fraud that oppresses them.

Why is it, that scarcely any are executed but the poor? The fact is a proof, among other things, of a wretchedness in their condition. Bred up without morals, and cast upon the world without a prospect, they are the exposed sacrifice of vice and legal barbarity. The millions that are superfluously wasted upon governments, are more than sufficient to reform those evils, and to benefit the condition of every man in a nation, not included within the purlieus of a court. This I hope to make appear in the progress of this work.

It is the nature of compassion to associate with misfortune. In taking up this subject, I seek no recompense —I fear no consequences. Fortified with that proud integrity that disdains to triumph or to yield, I will advocate the Rights of Man.

At an early period, little more than sixteen years of age, raw and adventurous, and heated with the false heroism of a master* who had served in a man of war, I began the carver of my own fortune, and entered on board the Terrible Privateer, Captain Death. From this adventure I was happily prevented by the affectionate and moral remonstrance of a good father, who, from his own habits of life, being of the Quaker profession, must have begun to look upon me as lost. But the impression, much as it effected at the time, began to wear away, and I entered afterwards in the King of Prussia Privateer, Captain Mendez, and went in her to sea. Yet, from such a beginning, and with all the inconveniences of early life against me, I am proud to say, that with a perseverance undismayed by difficulties, a disinterestedness that compelled respect, I have not only contributed to raise a new empire in the world, founded on a new system of government, but I have arrived at an eminence in political literature, the most difficult of all lines to succeed and excel in, which aristocracy, with all its aids, has not been able to reach or to rival.

*Rev. William Knowles, master of the grammar school at Thetford, in Norfolk.

Knowing my own heart, and feeling myself, as I now do, superior to all the skirmish of party, the inveteracy of interested or mistaken opponents, I answer not to falsehood or abuse, but proceed to the defects of the English government.*

*Politics and self-interest have been so uniformly connected, that the world, from being so often deceived, has a right to be suspicious of public characters: but with regard to myself, I am perfectly easy on this head. I did not, at my first setting out in public life, nearly seventeen years ago, turn my thoughts to subjects of government from motives of interest; and my conduct from that moment to this, proves the fact. I saw an opportunity, in which I thought I could do some good, and I followed exactly what my heart dictated. I neither read books, nor studied other people's opinions. I thought for myself. The case was this:

During the suspension of the old governments in America, both prior to and at the breaking out of hostilities, I was struck with the order and decorum with which every thing was conducted; and impressed with the idea, that a little more than what society naturally performed, was all the government that was necessary, and that monarchy and aristocracy were frauds and impositions upon mankind. On these principles I published the pamphlet *Common Sense*. The success it met with was beyond any thing since the invention of printing. I gave the copy-right to every state in the union, and the demand ran to not less than one hundred thousand copies. I continued the subject in the same manner, under the title of the *Crisis*, till the complete establishment of the revolution.

After the declaration of independence, Congress, unanimously and unknown to me appointed me secretary in the foreign department. This was agreeable to me, because it gave me an opportunity of seeing into the abilities of foreign courts, and their manner of doing business. But a misunderstanding arising between Congress and me, respecting one of their commissioners, then in Europe, Mr. Silas Deane, I resigned the office, and declined, at the same time, the pecuniary offers made me by the ministers of France and Spain, M. Gerard and Don Juan Mirralles.

I had by this time so completely gained the ear and confidence of America, and my independence was become so visible, as to give me a range in political writings, beyond, perhaps, what any man ever possessed in any country; and what is more extraordinary, I held it undiminished to the end of the war, and enjoy it in the same manner to the present moment. As my object was not myself, I set out with the determination, and happily with the disposition, of not being moved by praise or censure, friendship or calumny, nor of being drawn from my purpose by any personal altercation; and the man who cannot do this, is not fit for a public character.

When the war ended, I went from Philadelphia to Bordentown, on the east bank of the Delaware, where I have a small place. Congress was at this time at Princeton, fifteen miles distant; and General Washington had taken his head-quarters at Rocky-Hill, within the neighborhood of Congress, for the purpose of resigning his commission (the object for which he accepted it being accomplished) and of retiring to private life. While he was on this business, he wrote me the letter which I here subjoin.

Rocky-Hill, Sept. 10, 1783.

I have learned since I have been at this place, that you are at Bordentown. Whether for the sake of retirement or economy, I know not. Be it for either, for both, or whatever it may, if you will come to this place, and partake with me, I shall be exceedingly happy to see you.

Your presence may remind Congress of your past services to this country; and if it is in my power to impress them, command my best exertions with freedom, as they will be rendered cheerfully by one, who entertains a lively sense of the importance of your works, and who, with much pleasure, subscribes himself,

Your sincere friend, G. WASHINGTON.

During the war, in the latter end of the year 1780, I formed to myself the design of coming over to England, and communicated it to General Greene, who was then in

I begin with charters and corporations.

It is a perversion of terms to say, that a charter gives rights. It operates by a contrary effect, that of taking rights away. Rights are inherently in all the inhabitants; but charters, by annulling those rights in the majority, leave the right, by exclusion, in the hands of a few. If charters were constructed so as to express in direct terms, "*that every inhabitant, who is not a member of a corporation, shall not exercise the right of voting*," such charters would in the face be charters, not of rights, but of exclusion. The effect is the same under the form they now stand; and the only persons on whom they operate, are the persons whom they exclude. Those whose rights are guaranteed, by not being taken away, exercise no other rights than as members of the community they are entitled to without a charter; and, there-

Philadelphia, on his route to the southward, General Washington being then at too great a distance to communicate with immediately. I was strongly impressed with the idea, that, if I could get over to England, without being known, and only remain in safety till I could get out a publication, I could open the eyes of the country with respect to the madness and stupidity of its government. I saw that the parties in parliament had pitted themselves as far as they could go, and could make no new impressions on each other. General Greene entered fully into my views, but the affair of Arnold and Andre happening just after, he changed his mind, and, under strong apprehensions for my safety, wrote very pressingly to me from Annapolis, in Maryland, to give up the design, which, with some reluctance, I did. Soon after this I accompanied Colonel Laurens, (son of Mr. Laurens, who was then in the Tower,) to France, on business from Congress. We landed at L'Orient, and while I remained there, he being gone forward, a circumstance occurred that renewed my former design. An English packet from Falmouth to New-York, with government despatches on board, was brought into L'Orient. That a packet should be taken, is no very extraordinary thing, but that the despatches should be taken with it, will scarcely be credited, as they are always slung at the cabin window, in a bag loaded with cannon ball, and ready to be sunk in a moment. The fact, however, is as I have stated it, for the despatches came into my hands, and I read them. The capture, as I was informed, succeeded by the following stratagem: - The captain of the privateer Madame, who spoke English, on coming up with the packet, passed himself for the captain of an English frigate, and invited the captain of the packet on board, which, when done, he sent some of his own hands and secured the mail. But be the circumstance of the capture what it may, I speak with certainty as to the government despatches. They were sent up to Paris to Count Vergennes, and when Colonel Laurens and myself returned to America, we took the originals to Congress.

By these despatches I saw into the stupidity of the English cabinet far more than I otherwise could have done, and I renewed my former design. But Colonel Laurens was so unwilling to return alone, more especially, as among other matters, he had a charge of upwards of two hundred thousand pounds sterling in money, that I gave in to his wishes, and finally gave up my plan. But I am now certain, that if I could have executed it, it would not have been altogether unsuccessful.

fore, all charters have no other than an indirect negative operation. They do not give rights to A, but they make a difference in favor of A, by taking away the rights of B, and consequently are instruments of injustice.

But charters and corporations have a more extensive evil effect than what relates merely to elections. They are sources of endless contention in the places where they exist; and they lessen the common rights of national society. A native of England, under the operation of these charters and corporations, cannot be said to be an Englishman in the full sense of the word. He is not free of the nation, in the same manner that a Frenchman is free of France, and an American of America. His rights are circumscribed to the town, and, in some cases, to the parish of his birth; and all other parts, though in his native land, are to him as a foreign country. To acquire a residence in these, he must undergo a local naturalization by purchase, or he is forbidden or expelled the place. This species of feudality is kept up to aggrandize the corporations at the ruin of the towns; and the effect is visible.

The generality of corporation towns are in a state of solitary decay, and prevented from further ruin only by some circumstance in their situation, such as a navigable river, or a plentiful surrounding country. As population is one of the chief sources of wealth, (for without it, land itself has no value,) every thing which operates to prevent it, must lessen the value of property; and as corporations have not only this tendency, but directly this effect, they cannot but be injurious. If any policy were to be followed, instead of that of general freedom, to every person to settle where he chose, (as in France or in America,) it would be more consistent to give encouragement to new comers, than to preclude their admission by exacting premiums from them.*

*It is difficult to account for the origin of charter and corporation towns, unless we

The persons most immediately interested in the abolition of corporations, are the inhabitants of the towns where corporations are established. The instances of Manchester, Birmingham, and Sheffield, show, by contrast, the injury which those Gothic institutions are to property and commerce. A few examples may be found, such as that of London, whose natural and commercial advantages, owing to its situation on the Thames, is capable of bearing up against the political evils of a corporation; but in almost all other cases the fatality is too visible to be doubted or denied.

Though the whole nation is not so directly affected by the depression of property in corporation towns as the inhabitants themselves, it partakes of the consequences. By lessening the value of property, the quantity of national commerce is curtailed. Every man is a customer in proportion to his ability; and as all parts of a nation trade with each other, whatever affects any of the parts, must necessarily communicate to the whole.

As one of the houses of the English parliament is, in a great measure, made up by elections from these corporations; and as it is unnatural that a pure stream should flow from a foul fountain, its vices are but a continuation of the vices of its origin. A man of moral honor and good political principles, cannot submit to the mean drudgery and disgraceful arts, by which such elections are carried. To be a successful candidate, he must be destitute of the qualities that constitute a just legislator: and being thus disciplined to corruption by the mode of

suppose them to have arisen out of, or having been connected with some species of garrison services. The times in which they began justify this idea. The generality of those towns have been garrisons, and the corporations were charged with the care of the gates of the towns, when no military garrison was present. Their refusing or granting admission to strangers, which has produced the custom of giving, selling, and buying freedom, has more of the nature of garrison authority than civil government. Soldiers are free of all corporations throughout the nation, by the same propriety that every soldier is free of every garrison, and no other persons are. He can follow any employment, with the permission of his officers, in any corporation town throughout the nation.

entering into parliament, it is not to be expected that the representative should be better than the man.

Mr. Burke, in speaking of the English representation, has advanced as bold a challenge as ever was given in the days of chivalry. "Our representation," says he, "has been found *perfectly adequate to all the purposes* for which a representation of the people can be desired or devised. I defy," continues he, "the enemies of our constitution to show the contrary." This declaration from a man, who has been in constant opposition to all the measures of parliament the whole of his political life, a year or two excepted, is most extraordinary, and, comparing him with himself, admits of no other alternative, than that he acted against his judgment as a member, or has declared contrary to it as an author.

But it is not in the representation only that the defects lie, and therefore I proceed in the next place to aristocracy.

What is called the House of Peers, is constituted on a ground very similar to that, against which there is a law in other cases. It amounts to a combination of persons in one common interest. No reason can be given, why a house of legislation should be composed entirely of men whose occupation consists in letting landed property, than why it should be composed of those who hire, or of brewers, or bakers, or any other separate class of men.

Mr. Burke calls this house, "*the great ground and pillar of security to the landed interest.*" Let us examine this idea.

What pillar of security does the landed interest require, more than any other interest in the state, or what right has it to a distinct and separate representation from the general interest of a nation? The only use to be made of this power, (and which it has always made,) is to ward off taxes from itself, and throw the burden upon such articles of consumption by which itself would be least affected.

That this has been the consequence (and will always be the consequence of constructing governments on combinations,) is evident, with respect to England, from the history of its taxes.

Notwithstanding taxes have increased and multiplied upon every article of common consumption, the land tax, which more particularly affects this "pillar," has diminished. In 1788, the amount of the land-tax was £1,950,000 which is half a million less than it produced almost a hundred years ago,* notwithstanding the rentals are in many instances doubled since that period.

Before the coming of the Hanoverians, the taxes were divided in nearly equal proportions between the land and articles of consumption, the land bearing rather the largest share; but since that era, nearly thirteen millions annually of new taxes have been thrown upon consumption. The consequence of which has been a constant increase in the number and wretchedness of the poor, and in the amount of the poor-rates. Yet here again the burden does not fall in equal proportions on the aristocracy with the rest of the community. Their residences, whether in town or country, are not mixed with the habitations of the poor. They live apart from distress, and the expense of relieving it. It is in manufacturing towns and laboring villages that those burdens press the heaviest; in many of which it is one class of poor supporting another.

Several of the most heavy and productive taxes are so contrived, as to give an exemption to this pillar, thus standing in its own defence. The tax upon beer brewed for sale does not affect the aristocracy, who brew their own beer free of this duty. It falls only on those who have not conveniency or ability to brew, and who must purchase it in small quantities. But what will mankind

*See Sir John Sinclair's *History of the Revenue.* The land-tax in 1646 was £2,473,499.

think of the justice of taxation, when they know, that this tax alone, from which the aristocracy are from circumstances exempt, is nearly equal to the whole of the land-tax, being in the year 1788, (and it is not less now,) £1,666,152, and with its proportion of the taxes on malt and hops, it exceeds it. That a single article thus partially consumed, and that chiefly by the working part, should be subject to a tax equal to that on the whole rental of a nation, is, perhaps, a fact not to be paralleled in the history of revenues.

This is one of the consequences resulting from a house of legislation composed on the ground of a combination of common interest; for whatever their separate politics as to parties may be, in this they are united. Whether a combination acts to raise the price of an article for sale, or the rate of wages; or whether it acts to throw taxes from itself upon another class of the community, the principle and the effect are the same: and if the one be illegal, it will be difficult to show that the other ought to exist.

It is no use to say, that the taxes are first proposed in the House of Commons; for as the other house has always a negative, it can always defend itself; and it would be ridiculous to suppose that its aquiescence in the measures to be proposed were not understood beforehand. Besides which, it has obtained so much influence by borough traffic, and so many of its relations and connections are distributed on both sides of the commons, as to give it, besides an absolute negative in the house, a preponderancy in the other, in all matters of common concern.

It is difficult to discover what it meant by the *landed interest*, if it does not mean a combination of aristocratical land-holders, opposing their own pecuniary interest to that of the farmer, and every branch of trade, commerce, and manufacture. In all other respects, it is the

only interest that needs no partial protection. It enjoys the general protection of the world. Every individual, high or low, is interested in the fruits of the earth; men, women, and children, of all ages and degrees, will turn out to assist the farmer, rather than a harvest should not be got in; and they will not act thus by any other property. It is the only one for which the common prayer of mankind is put up, and the only one that can never fail from the want of means. It is the interest, not of the policy, but of the existence of man, and when it ceases, he must cease to be.

No other interest in a nation stands on the same united support. Commerce, manufactures, arts, sciences, and every thing else, compared with this, are supported but in parts. Their prosperity or their decay has not the same universal influence. When the valleys laugh and sing, it is not the farmer only, but all creation that rejoices. It is a prosperity that excludes all envy; and this cannot be said of any thing else.

Why then does Mr. Burke talk of this house of peers, as the pillar of the landed interest? Were that pillar to sink into the earth, the same landed property would continue, and the same plowing, sowing, and reaping would go on. The aristocracy are not the farmers who work the land, and raise the produce, but are the mere consumers of the rent; and when compared with the active world, are the drones, a seraglio of males, who neither collect the honey nor form the hive, but exist only for lazy enjoyment.

Mr. Burke, in his first essay, called aristocracy "*the Corinthian capital of polished society.*" Towards completing the figure, he has now added the *pillar*, but still the base is wanting; and whenever a nation chooses to act a Sampson, not blind, but bold, down go the temple of Dagon, the Lords and the Philistines.

If a house of legislation is to be composed of men of

one class, for the purpose of protecting a distinct interest, all the other interests, should have the same. The inequality as well as the burden of taxation, arises from admitting it in one case and not in all. Had there been a house of farmers, there had been no game laws; or a house of merchants and manufacturers, the taxes had neither been so unequal nor so excessive. It is from the power of taxation being in the hands of those who can throw so great a part of it from their own shoulders, that it has raged without a check.

Men of small or moderate estates are more injured by the taxes being thrown on articles of consumption, than they are eased by warding it from landed property, for the following reasons;

First, They consume more of the productive taxable articles, in proportion to their property, than those of large estates.

Secondly, Their residence is chiefly in towns, and their property in houses; and the increase of the poor-rates, occasioned by taxes on consumption, is in much greater proportion than the land-tax has been favored. In Birmingham, the poor-rates are not less than seven shillings in the pound. From this, as is already observed, the aristocracy are in a great measure exempt.

These are but a part of the mischiefs flowing from the wretched scheme of an house of peers.

As a combination, it can always throw a considerable portion of taxes from itself; and as an hereditary house, accountable to nobody, it resembles a rotten borough, whose consent is to be courted by interest. There are but few of its members who are not in some mode or other participators, or disposers of the public money. One turns a candle-holder, or a lord in waiting; another a lord of the bed-chamber, a groom of the stole, or any insignificant nominal office, to which a salary is annexed, paid out of the public taxes, and which avoids the direct

appearance of corruption. Such situations are derogatory to the character of man; and where they can be submitted to, honor cannot reside.

To all these are to be added the numerous dependants, the long list of the younger branches and distant relations, who are to be provided for at the public expense: in short, were an estimation to be made of the charge of the aristocracy to a nation, it will be found nearly equal to that of supporting the poor. The Duke of Richmond alone (and there are cases similar to his) takes away as much for himself, as would maintain two thousand poor and aged persons. Is it, then, any wonder, that under such a system of government, taxes and rates have multiplied to their present extent?

In stating these matters, I speak an open and disinterested language, dictated by no passion but that of humanity. To me, who have not only refused offers, because I thought them improper, but have declined rewards I might with reputation have accepted, it is no wonder that meanness and imposition appear disgusting. Independence is my happiness, and I view things as they are, without regard to place or person; my country is the world, and my religion is to do good.

Mr. Burke, in speaking of the aristocratical law of primogeniture, says, "It is the standard law of our landed inheritance; and which, without question, has a tendency, and I think," continues he, "a happy tendency, to preserve a character of weight and consequence."

Mr. Burke may call this law what he pleases, but humanity and impartial reflection will pronounce it a law of brutal injustice. Were we not accustomed to the daily practice, and did we only hear of it, as the law of some distant part of the world, we should conclude that the legislators of such countries had not yet arrived at a state of civilization.

As to its preserving a character of *weight and conse-*

quence, the case appears to me directly the reverse. It is an attaint upon character; a sort of privateering upon family property. It may have weight among dependant tenants, but it gives none on a scale of national, and much less of universal character. Speaking for myself, my parents were not able to give me a shilling, beyond what they gave me in education; and to do this they distressed themselves; yet I possess more of what is called consequence, in the world, than any one in Mr. Burke's catalogue of aristocrats.

Having thus glanced at some of the defects of the two houses of parliament, I proceed to what is called the crown, upon which I shall be very concise.

It signifies a nominal office of a million sterling a year, the business of which consists in receiving the money. Whether the person be wise or foolish, sane or insane, a native or a foreigner, matters not. Every ministry acts upon the same idea that Mr. Burke writes, namely, that the people must be hoodwinked, and held in superstitious ignorance by some bugbear or other; and what is called the Crown answers this purpose, and therefore it answers all the purposes to be expected from it. This is more than can be said of the other two branches.

The hazard to which this office is exposed in all countries, is not from any thing that can happen to the man, but from what may happen to the nation,—the danger of its coming to its senses.

It has been customary to call the crown the executive power, and the custom has continued, though the reason has ceased.

It was called the *executive*, because the person whom it signifies used, formerly, to sit in the character of a judge, in administering or executing the laws. The tribunals were then a part of the court. The power, therefore, which is now called the judicial, is what was called the executive; and, consequently, one or the other of the terms is

redundant, and one of the offices useless. When we speak of the crown now, it means nothing; it signifies neither a judge nor a general; besides which, it is the laws that govern, and not the man. The old terms are kept up, and give an appearance of consequence to empty forms; and the only effect they have is that of increasing expenses.

Before I proceed to the means of rendering governments more conducive to the general happiness of mankind than they are at present, it will not be improper to take a review of the progress of taxation in England.

It is a general idea, that when taxes are once laid on, they are never taken off. However true this may have been of late, it was not always so. Either, therefore, the people of former times were more watchful over government than those of the present, or government was administered with less extravagance.

It is now seven hundred years since the Norman conquest, and the establishment of what is called the crown. Taking this portion of time in seven separate periods of one hundred years each, the amount of the annual taxes, at each period, will be as follows:

Annual amount of taxes levied by William the conqueror, beginning in the year 1066, - - -	£400,000
Annual amount of taxes at one hundred years from the conquest, (1166) - - - - - -	200,000
Annual amount of taxes at two hundred years from the conquest, (1266) - - - - - -	150,000
Annual amount of taxes at three hundred years from the conquest, (1366) - - - - - -	130,000
Annual amount of taxes at four hundred years from the conquest, (1466) - - - - - -	100,000

These statements, and those which follow, are taken from Sir John Sinclair's *History of the Revenue;* by which it appears, that taxes continued decreasing for four hundred years, at the expiration of which time they were reduced three-fourths, *viz.* from four hundred thousand pounds to one hundred thousand. The people of Eng-

land, of the present day, have a traditionary and historical idea of the bravery of their ancestors; but whatever their virtues or vices might have been, they certainly were a people who would not be imposed upon, and who kept government in awe as to taxation, if not as to principle. Though they were not able to expel the monarchical usurpation, they restricted it to a republican economy of taxes.

Let us now review the remaining three hundred years.

Annual amount of taxes at five hundred years from the conquest, (1566) - - - - - - -	£ 500,000
Annual amount of taxes at six hundred years from the conquest, (1666) - - - - - - -	1,800,000
Annual amount of taxes at the present time, (1791)	17,000,000

The difference between the first four hundred years and the last three, is so astonishing, as to warrant the opinion, that the national character of the English has changed. It would have been impossible to have dragooned the former English into the excess of taxation that now exists; and when it is considered that the pay of the army, the navy, and of all the revenue-officers, is the same now as it was above a hundred years ago, when the taxes were not above a tenth part of what they are at present, it appears impossible to account for the enormous increase and expenditure, on any other ground than extravagance, corruption, and intrigue.*

*Several of the court newspapers have of late made frequent mention of Wat Tyler. That his memory should be traduced by court sycophants, and all those who live on the spoil of a public, is not to be wondered at. He was, however, the means of checking the rage and injustice of taxation in his time, and the nation owed much to his valor. The history is concisely this: — In the time of Richard II. a poll-tax was levied, of one shilling per head, upon every person in the nation, of whatever estate or condition, on poor as well as rich, above the age of fifteen years. If any favor was shown in the law, it was to the rich rather than to the poor: as no person could be charged more than twenty shillings for himself, family and servants, though ever so numerous; while all other families, under the number of twenty, were charged per head. Poll-taxes had always been odious; but this being also oppressive and unjust, it excited, as it naturally must, universal detestation among the poor and middle classes. The person known by the name of Wat Tyler, whose proper name was Walter, and a tyler by trade, lived at Deptford. The gatherer of the poll-tax, on coming to his house, demanded tax for one of his daughters, whom Tyler declared was under the age of fifteen. The tax-gatherer insisted on satisfying himself, and

With the revolution of 1688, and more so since the the Hanover succession, came the destructive system of continental intrigues, and the rage for foreign wars and foreign dominion; systems of such secure mystery, that the expenses admit of no accounts; a single line stands for millions. To what excess taxation might have extended, had not the French revolution contributed to break up the system, and put an end to pretences, is impossible to say. Viewed as that revolution ought to be, as the fortunate means of lessening the load of taxes of both countries, it is of as much importance to England as to France; and, if properly improved to all the advantages of which it is capable, and to which it leads, deserves as much celebration in one country as the other.

In pursuing this subject, I shall begin with the matter that first presents itself, that of lessening the burden of taxes; and shall then add such matters and propositions, respecting the three countries of England, France, and America, as the present prospect of things appears to justify; I mean an alliance of the three, for the purposes that will be mentioned in their proper place.

What has happened may happen again. By the statement before shown, of the progress of taxation, it is seen,

began an indecent examination of the girl, which enraging the father, he struck him with a hammer, that brought him to the ground, and was the cause of his death.

This circumstance served to bring the discontents to an issue. The inhabitants of the neighborhood espoused the cause of Tyler, who in a few days was joined, according to some histories, by upwards of fifty thousand men, and chosen their chief. With this force he marched to London, to demand an abolition of the tax, and a redress of their grievances. The court, finding itself in a forlorn condition, and unable to make resistance, agreed, with Richard at its head, to hold a conference with Tyler in Smithfield, making many fair professions, courtier-like, of its disposition to redress the oppressions. While Richard and Tyler were in conversation on these matters, each being on horseback, Walworth, than mayor of London, and one of the creatures of the court, watched an opportunity, and, like a cowardly assassin, stabbed Tyler with a dagger; and two or three others falling upon him, he was instantly sacrificed.

Tyler appears to have been an intrepid, disinterested man, with respect to himself. All his proposals made to Richard, were on a more just and public ground, than those which had been made to John by the barons; and notwithstanding the sycophancy of historians, and men like Mr. Burke, who seek to gloss over a base action of the court by traducing Tyler, his fame will outlive their falsehood. If the barons merited a monument to be erected in Runneymede, Tyler merits one in Smithfield.

that taxes have been lessened to a fourth part of what they had formerly been. Though the present circumstances do not admit of the same reduction, yet they admit of such a beginning, as may accomplish that end in a less time, than in the former case.

The amount of taxes for the year, ending at Michaelmass, 1788, was as follows:

Land tax	£1,950,000
Customs	3,789,274
Excise (including old and new malt)	6,751,727
Stamps	1,278,214
Miscellaneous taxes and incidents	1,803,755
	£15,572,970

Since the year 1788, upwards of one million, new taxes, have been laid on, besides the produce of the lotteries; and as the taxes have in general been more productive since than before, the amount may be taken, in round numbers, at £17,000,000.

N. B. The expense of collection and the drawbacks, which together amount to nearly two millions, are paid out of the gross amount; and the above is the net sum paid into the exchequer.

This sum of seventeen millions is applied to two different purposes; the one to pay the interest of the national debt, the other to pay the current expenses of each year. About nine millions are appropriated to the former; and the remainder, being nearly eight millions, to the latter. As to the million, said to be applied to the reduction of the debt, it is so much like paying with one hand and taking out with the other, as not to merit much notice.

It happened, fortunately for France, that she possessed national domains for paying off her debt, and thereby lessening her taxes; but as this is not the case in England, her reduction of taxes can only take place by reducing the current expenses, which may now be done to the amount of four or five millions annually, as will here-

after appear. When this is accomplished, it will more than counterbalance the enormous charge of the American war; and the saving will be from the same source from whence the evil arose.

As to the national debt, however heavy the interest may be in taxes, yet, as it serves to keep alive a capital, useful to commerce, it balances by its effects a considerable part of its own weight; and as the quantity of gold and silver in England is, by some means or other, short of its proper proportion,* (being not more than twenty millions, whereas it should be sixty,) it would, besides the injustice, be bad policy to extinguish a capital that serves to supply that defect. But, with respect to the current expense, whatever is saved therefrom is gain. The excess may serve to keep corruption alive, but is has no reaction on credit and commerce, like the interest of the debt.

It is now very probable, that the English government (I do not mean the nation) is unfriendly to the French revolution. Whatever serves to expose the intrigue and lessen the influence of courts, by lessening taxation, will be unwelcome to those who feed upon the spoil. Whilst the clamor of French intrigue, arbitrary power, popery, and wooden shoes could be kept up, the nations were easily allured and alarmed into taxes. Those days are now past; deception, it is to be hoped, has reaped its last harvest, and better times are in prospect for both countries, and for the world.

Taking it for granted that an alliance may be formed between England, France and America, for the purposes hereafter to be mentioned, the national expenses of France and England may consequently be lessened. The same fleets and armies will no longer be necessary to either, and the reduction can be made ship for ship on each side. But to accomplish these objects, the governments must

* Foreign intrigues, foreign wars, and foreign dominions, will in a great measure account for the deficiency.

necessarily be fitted to a common correspondent principle. Confidence can never take place, while a hostile disposition remains in either, or where mystery and secrecy on one side, is opposed to candor and openness on the other.

These matters admitted, the national expenses might be put back, *for the sake of a precedent*, to what they were at some period when France and England were not enemies. This, consequently, must be prior to the Hanover succession, and also to the revolution of 1688.* The first instance that presents itself, antecedent to those dates, is in the very wasteful and profligate times of Charles II. at which time England and France acted as allies. If I have chosen a period of great extravagance, it will serve to show modern extavagance in a still worse light; especially, as the pay of the navy, the army, and the revenue-officers has not increased since that time.

The peace establishment was then as follows: (See Sir John Sinclair's *History of the Revenue.*)

Navy	£300,000
Army	212,000
Ordnance	40,000
Civil List	462,115
	£1,014,115

The parliament, however, settled the whole annual peace establishment at £1,200,000.† If we go back to the

* I happened to be in England at the celebration of the centenary of the revolution of 1688. The characters of William and Mary have always appeared to me detestable; the one seeking to destroy his uncle, and the other her father, to get possession of power themselves: yet, as the nation was disposed to think something of that event, I felt hurt at seeing it ascribe the whole reputation of it to a man who had undertaken it as a job, and who, besides what he otherwise got, charged six hundred thousand pounds for the expense of the little fleet that brought him from Holland. George I. acted the same close-fisted part as William had done, and bought the Duchy of Bremen with the money he got from England, two hundred and fifty thousand pounds over and above his pay as king; and having thus purchased it at the expense of England, added it to his Hanoverian dominions for his own private benefit. In fact, every nation that does not govern itself, is governed as a job. England has been the prey of jobs ever since the revolution.

† Charles, like his predecessors and successors, finding that war was the harvest of governments, engaged in a war with the Dutch, the expense of which increased the annual expenditure to £1,800,000 as stated under the date of 1666; but the peace establishment was but £1,200,000.

time of Elizabeth, the amount of all the taxes was but half a million, yet the nation sees nothing during that period, that reproaches it with want of consequence.

All circumstances then taken together, arising from the French revolution, from the approaching harmony and reciprocal interest of the two nations, the abolition of court intrigue on both sides, and the progress of knowledge in the science of government, the annual expenditure might be put back to one million and a half, *viz.*

Navy - - - - - - - - - -	£ 500,000
Army - - - - - - - - - -	500,000
Expenses of government - - - - - -	500,000
	£ 1,500,000

Even this sum is six times greater than the expenses of government are in America, yet the civil internal government of England (I mean that administered by means of quarter sessions, juries, and assize, and which, in fact, is nearly the whole, and is performed by the nation,) is less expense upon the revenue, than the same species and portion of government is in America.

It is time that nations should be rational, and not be governed like animals for the pleasure of their riders. To read the history of kings, a man would be almost inclined to suppose that government consisted in stag-hunting, and that every nation paid a million a year to the huntsman. Man ought to have pride, or shame enough to blush at being thus imposed upon, and when he feels his proper character, he will. Upon all subjects of this nature, there is often passing in the mind a train of ideas he has not yet accustomed himself to encourage and communicate. Restrained by something that puts on the character of prudence, he acts the hypocrite upon himself as well as to others. It is, however, curious to observe how soon this spell can be dissolved. A single expression, boldly conceived and uttered, will sometimes put a whole company into their proper feelings, and whole nations are acted upon in the same manner.

As to the offices of which any civil government may be composed, it matters but little by what names they are described. In the routine of business, as before observed, whether a man be styled a president, a king, an emperor, a senator, or any thing else, it is impossible that any service he can perform, can merit from a nation more than ten thousand pounds a year; and as no man should be paid beyond his services, so every man of a proper heart will not accept more. Public money ought to be touched with the most scrupulous consciousness of honor. It is not the produce of riches only, but of the hard earnings of labor and poverty. It is drawn even from the bitterness of want and misery. Not a beggar passes, or perishes in the streets, whose mite is not in that mass.

Were it possible that the Congress of America, could be so lost to their duty, and to the interest of their constituents, as to offer General Washington, as president of America, a million a year, he would not, and he could not accept it. His sense of honor is of another kind. It has cost England almost seventy millions sterling, to maintain a family imported from abroad, of very inferior capacity to thousands in the nation; and scarcely a year has passed that has not produced some new mercenary application. Even the physicians' bills have been sent to the public to be paid. No wonder that jails are crowded, and taxes and poor-rates increased. Under such systems, nothing is to be looked for but what has already happened; and as to reformation, whenever it comes, it must be from the nation, and not from the government.

To show that the sum of five hundred thousand pounds is more than sufficient to defray all the expenses of government, exclusive of navies and armies, the following estimate is added for any country, of the same extent as England.

In the first place, three hundred representatives, fairly

elected, are sufficient for all the purposes to which legislation can apply, and preferable to a larger number. They may be divided into two, or three houses, or meet in one, as in France, or in any manner a constitution shall direct.

As representation is always considered in free countries, as the most honorable of all stations, the allowance made to it is merely to defray the expenses which the representatives incur by that service, and not to it as an office.

If an allowance at the rate of five hundred pounds per annum be made to every representative, deducting for non-attendance, the expense, if the whole number attended for six months each year, would be	£75,000
The official departments cannot reasonably exceed the following number, with the salaries annexed:	
Three offices, at ten thousand pounds each - - -	30,000
Ten ditto, at five thousand pounds each - - -	50,000
Twenty ditto, at two thousand pounds each - - -	40,000
Forty ditto, at one thousand pounds each - - -	40,000
Two hundred ditto, at five hundred pounds each - -	100,000
Three hundred ditto, at two hundred pounds each -	60,000
Five hundred ditto, at one hundred pounds each - -	50,000
Seven hundred ditto, at seventy-five pounds each -	52,500
	£497,500

If a nation chooses, it can deduct four per cent. from all offices, and make one of twenty thousand per annum.

All revenue-officers are paid out of the monies they collect, and therefore, are not included in this estimation.

The foregoing is not offered as an exact detail of offices, but to show the number and rate of salaries which five hundred thousand pounds will support; and it will, on experience, be found impracticable to find business sufficient to justify even this expense. As to the manner in which office business is now performed, the chiefs in several offices, such as the post-office, and certain offices in the exchequer, etc., do little more than sign their names three or four times a year; and the whole duty is performed by under clerks.

Taking, therefore, one million and a half as a sufficient peace establishment for all the honest purposes of government, which is three hundred thousand pounds more than

the peace establishment in the profligate and prodigal times of Charles II. (notwithstanding, as has been already observed, the pay and salaries of the army, navy, and revenue-officers, continue the same as at that period,) there will remain a surplus of upwards of six millions out of the present current expenses. The question then will be, how to dispose of this surplus.

Whoever has observed the manner in which trade and taxes twist themselves together, must be sensible of the impossibility of separating them suddenly.

First, Because the articles now on hand are already charged with the duty, and the reduction cannot take place on the present stock.

Secondly, Because, on all those articles on which the duty is charged in the gross, such as per barrel, hogshead, hundred weight, or ton, the abolition of the duty does not admit of being divided down so as fully to relieve the consumer, who purchases by the pint, or the pound. The last duty paid on strong beer and ale, was three shillings per barrel, which, if taken off, would lessen the purchase only half a farthing per pint, and, consequently, would not reach to practical relief.

This being the condition of a greater part of the taxes, it will be necessary to look for such others as are free from this embarrassment, and where the relief will be direct and visible, and capable of immediate operation.

In the first place, then, the poor-rates are a direct tax which every houskeeper feels, and who knows also, to a farthing, the sum which he pays. The national amount of the whole of the poor-rates is not positively known, but can be procured. Sir John Sinclair in his *History of the Revenue*, has stated it at £2,100,587. A considerable part of which is expended in litigations, in which the poor, instead of being relieved, are tormented. The expense, however, is the same to the parish, from whatever cause it arises.

In Birmingham, the amount of the poor-rates is fourteen thousand pounds a year. This, though a large sum, is moderate compared with the population. Birmingham is said to contain seventy thousand souls, and on a proportion of seventy thousand to fourteen thousand pounds poor-rates, the national amount of poor-rates, taking the population of England at seven millions, would be but one million four hundred thousand pounds. It is, therefore, most probable, that the population of Birmingham is over-rated. Fourteen thousand pounds is the proportion upon fifty thousand souls, taking two millions of poor-rates as the national amount.

Be it, however, what it may, it is no other than the consequence of the excessive burden of taxes, for, at the time when the taxes were very low, the poor were able to maintain themselves; and there were no poor-rates.* In the present state of things, a laboring man, with a wife and two or three children, does not pay less than between seven and eight pounds a year in taxes. He is not sensible of this, because it is disguised to him in the articles which he buys, and he thinks only of their dearness; but as the taxes take from him, at least, a fourth part of his yearly earnings, he is consequently disabled from providing for a family, especially if himself, or any of them, are afflicted with sickness.

The first step, therefore, of practical relief, would be to abolish the poor-rates entirely, and, in lieu thereof, to make a remission of taxes to the poor to double the amount of the present poor-rates, *viz.*, four millions annually out of the surplus taxes. By this measure, the poor would be benefited two millions, and the housekeepers two millions. This alone would be equal to a reduction of one hundred and twenty millions of the national debt, and consequently equal to the whole expense of the American war.

* Poor-rates began about the time of Henry VIII. when taxes began to increase, and they have increased as the taxes increased ever since.

It will then remain to be considered, which is the most effectual mode of distributing the remission of four millions.

It is easly seen, that the poor are generally composed of large families of children, and old people unable to labor. If these two classes are provided for, the remedy will so far reach to the full extent of the case, that what remains will be incidental, and, in a great measure, fall within the compass of benefit clubs, which, though of humble invention, merit to be ranked among the best of modern institutions.

Admitting England to contain seven millions of souls; if one-fifth thereof are of that class of poor which need support, the number will be one million four hundred thousand. Of this number, one hundred and forty thousand will be aged poor, as will be hereafter shown, and for which a distinct provision will be proposed.

There will then remain one million two hundred and sixty thousand, which, at five souls to each family, amount to two hundred and fifty-two thousand families, rendered poor from the expense of children and the weight of taxes.

The number of children under fourteen years of age, in each of those families, will be found to be about five to every two families; some having two, others three; some one, and others four; some none, and others five; but it rarely happens that more than five are under fourteen years of age, and after this age they are capable of service, or of being apprenticed.

Allowing five children (under fourteen years) to every two families,

The number of children will be - - - -	630,000
The number of parents (were they all living) would be	504,000

It is certain that if the children are provided for, the parents are relieved of consequence, because it is from the expense of bringing up children that their poverty arises.

Having thus ascertained the greatest number that can be supposed to need support on account of young families, I proceed to the mode of relief, or distribution, which is,

To pay as a remission of taxes to every poor family, out of the surplus taxes, and in room of poor-rates, four pounds a year for every child under fourteen years of age; enjoining the parents of such children to send them to school, to learn reading, writing, and common arithmetic; the ministers of every parish, of every denomination, to certify jointly to an office, for this purpose, that the duty is performed. The amount of this expense will be:

For six hundred and thirty thousand children at four pounds each per annum - - - - - £2,520,000

By adopting this method, not only the poverty of the parents will be relieved, but ignorance will be banished from the rising generation, and the number of poor will hereafter become less, because their abilities, by the aid of education, will be greater. Many a youth, with good natural genius, who is apprenticed to a mechanical trade, such as a carpenter, joiner, millwright, blacksmith, &c., is prevented getting forward the whole of his life, from the want of a little common education when a boy.

I now proceed to the case of the aged.

I divide age into two classes. First, the approach of old age, beginning at fifty. Secondly, old age commencing at sixty.

At fifty, though the mental faculties of man are in full vigor, and his judgment better than at any preceding date, the bodily powers are on the decline. He cannot bear the same quantity of fatigue as at an earlier period. He begins to earn less, and is less capable of enduring the wind and weather; and in those retired employments where much sight is required, he fails apace, and feels himself like an old horse, beginning to be turned adrift.

At sixty, his labor ought to be over, at least from direct necessity. It is painful to see old age working

itself to death, in what are called civilized countries, for its daily bread.

To form some judgment of the number of those above fifty years of age, I have several times counted the persons I met in the streets of London, men, women, and children, and have generally found that the average is one in about sixteen or seventeen. If it be said that aged persons do not come much into the streets, so neither do infants; and a great proportion of grown children are in schools, and in the work-shops as apprentices. Taking then sixteen for a divisor, the whole number of persons, in England, of fifty years and upwards, of both sexes, rich and poor, will be four hundred and twenty thousand.

The persons to be provided for out of this gross number will be, husbandmen, common laborers, journeymen of every trade, and their wives, sailors, and disbanded soldiers, worn out servants of both sexes, and poor widows.

There will be also a considerable number of middling tradesmen, who, having lived decently in the former part of life, begin, as age approaches, to lose their business, and at last fall into decay.

Besides these, there will be constantly thrown off from the revolutions of that wheel, which no man can stop, nor regulate, a number from every class of life connected with commerce and adventure.

To provide for all those accidents, and whatever else may befall, I take the number of persons, who at one time or other of their lives, after fifty years of age, may feel it necessary or comfortable to be better supported, than they can support themselves, and that not as a matter of grace and favor, but of right, at one-third of the whole number, which is one hundred and forty thousand, as stated p. 239, and for whom a distinct provision was to be made. If there be more, society, notwithstanding the show and pomposity of government, is in a deplorable condition in England.

Of this one hundred and forty thousand, I take one-half, seventy thousand, to be of the age of fifty and under sixty, and the other half to be sixty years and upwards. Having thus ascertained the probable proportion of the number of aged persons, I proceed to the mode of rendering their condition comfortable, which is,

To pay to every such person of the age of fifty years, and until he shall arive at the age of sixty, the sum of six pounds per annum out of the surplus taxes; and ten pounds per annum during life, after the age of sixty. The expense of which will be:

Seventy thousand persons at six pounds per annum	£. 420,000
Seventy thousand persons at ten pounds per annum	700,000
	£ 1,120,000

This support, as already remarked, is not of the nature of charity, but of a right. Every person in England, male and female, pays on an average of taxes, two pounds eight shillings and sixpence per annum from the day of his (or her) birth; and if the expense of collection be added, he pays two pounds eleven shillings and sixpence; consequently, at the end of fifty years, he has paid one hundred and twenty-eight pounds fifteen shillings; and at sixty, one hundred and fifty-four pounds ten shillings. Converting, therefore, his (or her) individual tax into a tontine, the money he shall receive after fifty years, is but little more than the legal interest of the net money he has paid; the rest is made up from those whose circumstances do not require them to draw such support, and the capital in both cases defrays the expenses of government. It is on this ground that I have extended the probable claims to one-third of the number of aged persons in the nation. Is it then better that the lives of one hundred and forty thousand aged persons be rendered comfortable, or that a million a year of public money be expended on any one individual, and he often of the most worthless and insignificant character? Let reason and

justice, let honor and humanity, let even hypocrisy, sycophancy, and Mr. Burke, let George, let Louis, Leopold, Frederic, Catherine, Cornwallis, or Tippoo Saib, answer the question.*

The sum thus remitted to the poor will be:

To two hundred and fifty-two thousand poor families, containing six hundred and thirty thousand children,	£2,520,000
To one hundred and fifty thousand aged persons,	1.120,000
	£3,640,000

There will then remain three hundred and sixty thousand pounds out of the four millions, part of which may be applied as follows:

After all the above cases are provided for, there will still be a number of families who, though not properly of the class of poor, yet find it difficult to give education to their children; and such children, under such a case, would be in a worse condition than if their parents were actually poor. A nation under a well regulated government, should permit none to remain uninstructed. It is monarchical and aristocratical governments only that require ignorance for their support.

Suppose then four hundred thousand children to be in this condition, which is a greater number than ought to be supposed, after the provisions already made, the method will be:

To allow for each of those children ten shillings a year for the expense of schooling, for six years each,

*Reckoning the taxes by families, five to a family, each family pays on an average £12 17 6 per annum: To this sum are to be added the poor-rates. Though all pay taxes in the articles they consume, all do not pay poor-rates. About two millions are exempted, some as not being housekeepers, others as not being able, and the poor themselves, who receive the relief. The average, therefore, of poor-rates on the remaining number, is forty shillings for every family of five persons, which makes the whole average amount of taxes and rates £14 17 6. For six persons, £17 17. For seven persons £20 16 6.

The average of taxes in America, under the new or representative system of government, including the interest of the debt contracted in the war, and taking the population at four millions of souls, which it now amounts to, and is daily increasing, is five shillings per head, men, women, and children. The difference, therefore, between the two governments, is as under:

	England.	America.
For a family of five persons	£14 17 6	£1 5 0
For a family of six persons	17 17 0	1 10 0
For a family of seven persons	20 16 6	1 15 0

which will give them six months schooling each year, and half a crown a year for paper and spelling books.

The expense of this will be annually* £250,000.

There will then remain one hundred and ten thousand pounds.

Notwithstanding the great modes of relief which the best instituted and best principled government may devise, there will still be a number of smaller cases, which it is good policy as well as beneficence in a nation to consider.

Were twenty shillings to be given to every woman immediately on the birth of a child, who should make the demand, and none will make it whose circumstances do not require it, it might relieve a great deal of instant distress.

There are about two hundred thousand births yearly in England; and if claimed by one-fourth,

The amount would be - - - - £50,000

And twenty shillings to every new married couple who should claim in like manner. This would not exceed the sum of - - - - £20,000

Also twenty thousand pounds to be appropriated to defray the funeral expenses of persons, who, travelling for work, may die at a distance from their friends. By relieving parishes from this charge, the sick stranger will be better treated.

I shall finish this part of my subject with a plan adapted to the particular condition of a metropolis, such as London.

* Public schools do not answer the general purpose of the poor. They are chiefly in corporation-towns, from which the country towns and villages are excluded; or, if admitted, the distance occasions a great loss of time. Education, to be useful to the poor, should be on the spot; and the best method, I believe, to accomplish this, is to enable the parents to pay the expense themselves. There are always persons of both sexes to be found in every village, especially when growing into years, capable of such an undertaking. Twenty children, at ten shillings each (and that not more than six months in each year,) would be as much as some livings amount to in the remote parts of England; and there are often distressed clergymen's widows to whom such an income would be acceptable. Whatever is given on this account to children answers two purposes, to them it is education, to those who educate them it is a livelihood.

Cases are continually occurring in a metropolis different from those which occur in the country, and for which a different, or rather an additional mode of relief is necessary. In the country, even in large towns, people have a knowledge of each other and distress never rises to that extreme height it sometimes does in a metropolis. There is no such thing in the country as persons, in the literal sense of the word, starved to death, or dying with cold from the want of a lodging. Yet such cases, and others equally as miserable, happen in London.

Many a youth comes up to London full of expectations, and little or no money, and unless he gets employment he is already half undone; and boys bred up in London without any means of a livelihood, and, as it often happens, of dissolute parents, are in a still worse condition, and servants long out of place are not much better off. In short, a world of little cases are continually arising, which busy or affluent life knows not of, to open the first door to distress. Hunger is not among the postponable wants, and a day, even a few hours, in such a condition, is often the crisis of a life of ruin.

These circumstances, which are the general cause of the little thefts and pilferings that lead to greater, may be prevented. There yet remain twenty thousand pounds out of the four millions of surplus taxes, which, with another fund hereafter to be mentioned, amounting to about twenty thousand pounds more, cannot be better applied than to this purpose. The plan then will be:

First, To erect two or more buildings, or take some already erected, capable of containing at least six thousand persons, and to have in each of these places as many kinds of employment as can be contrived, so that every person who shall come, may find something which he or she can do.

Secondly, To receive all who shall come, without inquiring who or what they are. The only condition to

be, that for so much or so many hours work, each person shall receive so many meals of wholesome food, and a warm lodging, at least as good as a barrack. That a certain portion of what each person's work shall be worth shall be reserved, and given to him, or her, on their going away; and that each person shall stay as long, or as short time, or come as often as he chooses, on these conditions.

If each person staid three months, it would assist by rotation twenty-four thousand persons annually, though the real number, at all times, would be but six thousand. By establishing an asylum of this kind, such persons, to whom temporary distresses occur, would have an opportunity to recruit themselves, and be enabled to look ou for better employment.

Allowing that their labor paid but one-half the expense of supporting them, after reserving a portion of their earnings for themselves, the sum of forty thousand pounds additional would defray all other charges for even a greater number than six thousand.

The fund properly convertible to this purpose, in addition to the twenty thousand pounds, remaining of the former fund, will be the produce of the tax upon coals, and so iniquitously and wantonly applied to the support of the Duke of Richmond. It is horrid that any man, more especially at the price coals now are, should live on the distresses of a community; and any government permitting such an abuse deserves to be dissolved. This fund is said to be about twenty thousand pounds per annum.

I shall now conclude this plan with enumerating the several particulars, and then proceed to other matters.

The enumeration is as follows:

First, Abolition of two millions poor-rates.

Secondly, Provision for two hundred and fifty-two thousand poor families.

Thirdly, Education for one million and thirty thousand children.

Fourthly, Comfortable provision for one hundred and forty thousand aged persons.

Fifthly, Donation of twenty shillings each for fifty thousand births.

Sixthly, Donation of twenty shillings each for twenty thousand marriages.

Seventhly, Allowance of twenty thousand pounds for the funeral expenses of persons travelling for work, and dying at a distance from their friends.

Eightly, Employment, at all times, for the casual poor in the cities of London and Westminster.

By the operation of this plan, the poor laws, those instruments of civil torture, will be superseded, and the wasteful expense of litigation prevented. The hearts of the humane will not be shocked by ragged and hungry children, and persons of seventy and eighty years of age begging for bread. The dying poor will not be dragged from place to place to breathe their last, as a reprisal of parish upon parish. Widows will have a maintenance for their children, and not be carted away, on the death of their husbands, like culprits and criminals; and children will no longer be considered as increasing the distresses of their parents. The haunts of the wretched will be known, because it will be to their advantage; and the number of petty crimes, the offspring of distress and poverty, will be lessened. The poor, as well as the rich, will then be interested in the support of government, and the cause and apprehension of riots and tumults will cease. Ye who sit in ease, and solace yourselves in plenty, and such there are in Turkey and Russia, as well as in England, and who say to yourselves, "Are we not well off," have ye thought of these things? When ye do, ye will cease to speak and feel for yourselves alone.

The plan is easy in practice. It does not embarrass trade by a sudden interruption in the order of taxes, but effects the relief by changing the application of them; and the money necessary for the purpose can be drawn from the excise collections, which are made eight times a year in every market town in England.

Having now arranged and concluded this subject, I proceed to the next.

Taking the present current expenses at seven millions and a half, which is the least amount they are now at, there will remain (after the sum of one million and a half be taken for the new current expenses, and four millions for the before mentioned service) the sum of two millions, part of which to be applied as follows:

Though fleets and armies, by an alliance with France, will, in a great measure, become useless, yet the persons who have devoted themselves to those services, and have thereby unfitted themselves for other lines of life, are not to be sufferers by the means that make others happy. They are a different description of men to those who form or hang about a court.

A part of the army will remain at least for some years, and also of the navy, for which a provision is already made, in the former part of this plan, of one million, which is almost half a million more than the peace establishment of the army and navy in the prodigal times of Charles II.

Suppose then fifteen thousand soldiers to be disbanded, and to allow to each of those men three shillings a week during life, clear of all deductions, to be paid in the same manner as the Chelsea college pensioners are paid, and for them to return to their trades and their friends; and also to add fifteen thousand sixpences per week to the pay of the soldiers who shall remain; the annual expense will be:

To the pay of fifteen thousand disbanded soldiers, at three shillings per week,	£117,000
Additional pay to the remaining soldiers,	19,500
Suppose that the pay to the officers of the disbanded corps be of the same amount as the sum allowed to the men	117,000
	£253,500
To prevent bulky estimations, admit the same sum to the disbanded navy as to the army, and the same increase of pay	253,500
Total,	£507,000

Every year some part of this sum of half a million (I omit the odd seven thousand pounds, for the purpose of keeping the account unembarrassed) will fall in, and the whole of it in time, as it is on the ground of life annuities, except the increased pay of thirty-nine thousand pounds. As it falls in, a part of the taxes may be taken off; for instance, when thirty thousand pounds fall in, the duty on hops may be wholly taken off; and as other parts fall in, the duties on candles and soap may be lessened, till at last they will totally cease. There now remains at least one million and a half of surplus taxes.

The tax on houses and windows is one of those direct taxes, which, like the poor-rates, is not confounded with trade; and when taken off, the relief will be instantly felt. This tax falls heavy on the middle class of people.

The amount of this tax by the returns of 1788, was:

Houses and windows by the act of 1766	£385,459 11 7
do. do. by the act of 1779	130,739 14 5½
Total,	£516,199 6 0½

If this tax be struck off, there will then remain about one million of surplus taxes, and as it is always proper to keep a sum in reserve, for incidental matters, it may be best not to extend reductions further, in the first instance, but to consider what may be accomplished by other modes of reform.

Among the taxes most heavily felt is the commutation tax. I shall, therefore, offer a plan for its abolition, by

substituting another in its place, which will effect three objects at once:

First, That of removing the burden to where it can best be borne.

Secondly, Restoring justice among families by distribution of property.

Thirdly, Extirpating the overgrown influence arising from the unnatural law of primogeniture, and which is one of the principal sources of corruption at elections.

The amount of the commutation tax by the returns of 1788, was - - - - - - - - - £771,657

When taxes are proposed, the country is amused by the plausible language of taxing luxuries. One thing is called a luxury at one time, and something else at another; but the real luxury does not consist in the article, but in the means of procuring it, and this is always kept out of sight.

I know not why any plant or herb of the field should be a greater luxury in one country than another, but an overgrown estate in either is a luxury at all times, and, as such, is the proper object of taxation. It is, therefore, right to take those kind tax-making gentlemen upon their own word, and argue on the principle themselves have laid down, that of *taxing luxuries*. If they or their champion, Mr. Burke, who, I fear, is growing out of date like the man in armor, can prove that an estate of twenty, thirty, or forty thousand pounds a year is not a luxury, I will give up the argument.

Admitting that any annual sum, say for instance, one thousand pounds, is necessary or sufficient for the support of a family, consequently the second thousand is of the nature of a luxury, the third still more so, and by proceeding on, we shall at last arrive at a sum that may not improperly be called a prohibitable luxury. It would be impolitic to set bounds to property acquired by industry, and therefore it is right to place the prohibition beyond

the probable acquisition to which industry can extend; but there ought to be a limit to property, or the accumulation of it by bequest. It should pass in some other line. The richest in every nation have poor relations, and those very often near in consanguinity.

The following table of progressive taxation is constructed on the above principles, and as a substitute for the commutation tax. It will reach the point of prohibition by a regular operation, and thereby supersede the aristocratical law of primogeniture.

TABLE I.

A tax on all estates of the clear yearly value of fifty pounds, after deducting the land tax, and up

To £500	0s 3d per pound.
From 500 to 1000	0 6
On the second thousand	0 9
On the third ditto	1 0
On the fourth ditto	1 6
On the fifth ditto	2 0
On the sixth ditto	3 0
On the seventh ditto	4 0
On the eighth ditto	5 0
On the ninth ditto	6 0
On the tenth ditto	7 0
On the eleventh ditto	8 0
On the twelfth ditto	9 0
On the thirteenth ditto	10 0
On the fourteenth ditto	11 0
On the fifteenth ditto	12 0
On the sixteenth ditto	13 0
On the seventeenth ditto	14 0
On the eighteenth ditto	15 0
On the nineteenth ditto	16 0
On the twentieth ditto	17 0
On the twenty-first ditto	18 0
On the twenty-second ditto	19 0
On the twenty-third ditto	20 0

The foregoing table shows the progression per pound on every progressive thousand. The following table shows the amount of the tax on every thousand separately, and in the last column, the total amount of all the separate sums collected.

TABLE II.

An estate of	£50	per annum at		3*d*	per pound pays		£0	12	6
	100	"	"	3	"	"	1	5	0
	200	"	"	3	"	"	2	10	0
	300	"	"	3	"	"	3	15	0
	400	"	"	3	"	"	5	0	0
	500	"	"	3	"	"	7	5	0

After £500—the tax of sixpence per pound takes place on the second £500,—consequently an estate of £1000 per annum pays £21 15 and so on.

								Total amount.	
For the 1st	£500	at	0*s*	3*d*	per pound	£7	5	£21	15
2d	500	at	0	6	" "	14	10		
2d	1000	at	0	9	" "	37	10	59	5
3d	1000	at	1	0	" "	50	0	109	5
4th	1000	at	1	6	" "	75	0	184	5
5th	1000	at	2	0	" "	100	0	284	5
6th	1000	at	3	0	" "	150	0	434	5
7th	1000	at	4	0	" "	200	0	634	5
8th	1000	at	5	0	" "	250	0	880	5
9th	1000	at	6	0	" "	300	0	1180	5
10th	1000	at	7	0	" "	350	0	1530	5
11th	1000	at	8	0	" "	400	0	1930	5
12th	1000	at	9	0	" "	450	0	2380	5
13th	1000	at	10	0	" "	500	0	2880	5
14th	1000	at	11	0	" "	550	0	3430	5
15th	1000	at	12	0	" "	600	0	4030	5
16th	1000	at	13	0	" "	650	0	4680	5
17th	1000	at	14	0	" "	700	0	5380	5
18th	1000	at	15	0	" "	750	0	6130	5
19th	1000	at	16	0	" "	800	0	6930	5
20th	1000	at	17	0	" "	850	0	7780	5
21st	1000	at	18	0	" "	900	0	8680	5
22d	1000	at	19	0	" "	950	0	9630	5
23d	1000	at	20	0	" "	1000	0	10630	5

At the twenty-third thousand the tax becomes twenty shillings in the pound, and, consequently, every thousand beyond that sum, can produce no profit but by dividing the estate. Yet, formidable as this tax appears, it will not, I believe, produce so much as the commutation tax; should it produce more, it ought to be lowered to that amount upon estates under two or three thousand a year.

On small and middling estates it is lighter (as it is intended to be) than the commutation tax. It is not till after seven or eight thousand a year, that it begins to be

heavy. The object is not so much the produce of the tax as the justice of the measure. The aristocracy has screened itself too much, and this serves to restore a part of the lost equilibrium.

An an instance of screening itself, it is only necessary to look back to the first establishment of the excise laws, at what is called the revolution, or the coming of Charles II. The aristocratical interest then in power, commuted the feudal services itself was under, by laying a tax on beer brewed for *sale;* that is, they compounded with Charles for an exemption from those services for themselves and their heirs, by a tax to be paid by other people. The aristocracy do not purchase beer brewed for sale, but brew their own beer free of the duty, and if any commutation at that time was necessary, it ought to have been at the expense of those for whom the exemptions from those services were intended;* instead of which, it was thrown on an entire different class of men.

But the chief object of this progressive tax (besides the justice of rendering taxes more equal than they are) is, as already stated, to extirpate the overgrown influence arising from the unnatural law of primogeniture, and which is one of the principal sources of corruption at elections.

It would be attended with no good consequences to inquire how such vast estates as thirty, forty, or fifty thousand a year could commence, and that at a time when commerce and manufactures were not in a state to admit of such acquisitions. Let it be sufficient to remedy the evil by putting them in a condition of descending again to the community by the quiet means of apportioning them among all the heirs and heiresses of those families. This will be the more necessary, because

* The tax on beer brewed for sale, from which the aristocracy are exempt, is almost one million more than the present commutation tax, being by the returns of 1788, £1,666,152, and consequently, they ought to take on themselves the amount of the commutation tax, as they are already exempted from one which is almost a million greater.

hitherto the aristocracy have quartered their younger children and connexions upon the public, in useless posts, places and offices, which, when abolished, will leave them destitute, unless the law of primogeniture be also abolished or superseded.

A progressive tax will, in a great measure, effect this object, and that as a matter of interest to the parties most immediately concerned, as will be seen by the following table; which shows the net produce upon every estate, after subtracting the tax. By this it will appear, that after an estate exceeds thirteen or fourteen thousand a year, the remainder produces but little profit to the holder, and consequently, will either pass to the younger children or to other kindred.

TABLE III.

Showing the net produce of every estate from one thousand to twenty-three thousand pounds a year.

No of thousands per annum.	*Total tax subtracted*	*Net produce.*
£1000	£21	£979
2000	59	1941
3000	109	2891
4000	184	3816
5000	284	4716
6000	434	5566
7000	634	6366
8000	880	7120
9000	1180	7820
10,000	1530	8480
11,000	1930	9070
12,000	2380	9620
13,000	2880	10,120
14,000	3430	10,670
15,000	4030	10,970
16,000	4680	11,320
17,000	5380	11,620
18,000	6130	11,870
19,000	6930	12,170
20,000	7780	12,220
21,000	8680	12,320
22,000	9630	12,370
23,000	10,630	12,370

N. B. The odd shillings are dropped in this table.

According to this table, an estate cannot produce more than £12,370 clear of the land tax and the progressive tax, and therefore the dividing such estates will follow as a matter of family interest. An estate of £23,000 a year, divided into five estates of four thousand each and one of three, will be charged only £1,129, which is but five per cent., but if held by any one possessor, will be charged £10,630.

Although an inquiry into the origin of those estates be unnecessary, the continuation of them in their present state is another subject. It is a matter of national concern. As hereditary estates, the law has created the evil, and it ought also to provide the remedy. Primogeniture ought to be abolished, not only because it is unnatural and unjust, but because the country suffers by its operation. By cutting off (as before observed) the younger children from their proper portion of inheritance, the public is loaded with the expense of maintaining them; and the freedom of elections violated by the overbearing influence which this unjust monopoly of family property produces. Nor is this all. It occasions a waste of national property. A considerable part of the land of the country is rendered unproductive, by the great extent of parks and chases which this law serves to keep up, and this at a time when the annual production of grain is not equal to the national consumption.* In short the evils of the aristocratical system are so great and numerous, so inconsistent with every thing that is just, wise, natural and beneficent, that when they are considered, there ought not to be a doubt that many, who are now classed under that description, will wish to see such a system abolished.

What pleasure can they derive from contemplating the exposed condition, and almost certain beggary of their younger offspring? Every aristocratical family has an

*See the Reports on the Corn Trade.

appendage of family beggars hanging round it, which, in a few ages, or a few generations, are shook off, and console themselves with telling their tale in almshouses, work-houses and prisons. This is the natural consequence of aristocracy. The peer and the beggar are often of the same family. One extreme produces the other; to make one rich many must be made poor; neither can the system be supported by other means.

There are two classes of people to whom the laws of England are particularly hostile, and those the most helpless; younger children and the poor. Of the former I have just spoken; of the latter I shall mention one instance out of the many that might be produced, and with which I shall close this subject.

Several laws are in existence for regulating and limiting workmen's wages. Why not leave them as free to make their own bargains, as the law-makers are to let their farms and houses? Personal labor is all the property they have. Why is that little, and the little freedom they enjoy, to be infringed? But the injustice will appear stronger, if we consider the operation and effect of such laws. When wages are fixed by what is called a law, the legal wages remain stationary, while every thing else is in progression; and as those who make that law, still continue to lay on new taxes by other laws, they increase the expense of living by one law, and take away the means by another.

But if these gentlemen law-makers and tax-makers thought it right to limit the poor pittance which personal labor can produce, and on which a whole family is to be supported, they certainly must feel themselves happily indulged in a limitation on their own part, of not less than twelve thousand a year, and that of property they never acquired (nor probably any of their ancestors), and of which they have made so ill a use.

Having now finished this subject, I shall bring the

several particulars into one view, and then proceed to other matters.

The first eight articles are brought forward from p. 246.

1. Abolition of two millions poor-rates.

2. Provision for two hundred and fifty-two thousand poor families, at the rate of four pounds per head for each child under fourteen years of age; which, with the addition of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, provides also education for one million and thirty thousand children.

3. Annuity of six pounds per annum each for all poor persons, decayed tradesmen and others, supposed seventy thousand, of the age of fifty years, and until sixty.

4. Annuity of ten pounds each for life for all poor persons, decayed tradesmen, and others, supposed seventy thousand, of the age of sixty years.

5. Donation of twenty shillings each for fifty thousand births.

6. Donation of twenty shillings each for twenty thousand marriages.

7. Allowance of twenty thousand pounds for the funeral expenses of persons travelling for work, and dying at a distance from their friends.

8. Employment at all times for the casual poor in the cities of London and Westminster.

Second enumeration.

9. Abolition of the tax on houses and windows.

10. Allowance of three shillings per week for life to fifteen thousand disbanded soldiers, and a proportionate allowance to the officers of the disbanded corps.

11. Increase of pay to the remaining soldiers of £19,500 annually.

12. The same allowance to the disbanded navy, and the same increase of pay, as to the army.

13. Abolition of the commutation tax.

14. Plan of a progressive tax, operating to extirpate

the unjust and unnatural law of primogeniture, and the vicious influence of the aristocratical system.*

There yet remains, as already stated, one million of surplus taxes. Some part of this will be required for circumstances that do not immediately present themselves, and such part as shall not be wanted, will admit of a further reduction of taxes equal to that amount.

Among the claims that justice requires to be made, the condition of the inferior revenue-officers will merit attention. It is a reproach to any government to waste such an immensity of revenue in sinecures and nominal and unnecessary places and offices, and not allow even a decent livelihood to those on whom the labor falls. The salary of the inferior officers of the revenue has stood at the petty pittance of less than fifty pounds a year, for upwards of one hundred years. It ought to be seventy. About one hundred and twenty thousand pounds applied to this purpose, will put all those salaries in a decent condition.

This was proposed to be done almost twenty years ago, but the treasury board then in being, startled at it, as it might lead to similar expectations from the army and navy; and the event was, that the king, or somebody for him, applied to parliament to have his own salary raised a hundred thousand pounds a year, which being done, every thing else was laid aside.

*When inquiries are made into the condition of the poor, various degrees of distress will most probably be found, to render a different arrangement preferable to that which is already proposed. Widows with families will be in greater want than where there are husbands living. There is also a difference in the expense of living in different countries; and more so in fuel.

Suppose fifty thousand extraordinary cases at the rate of ten pounds per family per annum £500,000
100,000 families, at £8 per family per annum 800,000
100,000 families, at 7 " " 700,000
104,000 families, at 5 " " 520,000
And instead of ten shillings per head for the education of other children, to allow fifty shillings per family for that purpose to 50,000 families . 250,000
2,770,000
140,000 aged persons as before, ... 1,120,000
£3,890,000

This arrangement amounts to the same sum as stated in p. 242, including the £250,000 for education; but it provides (including the aged people) for four hundred and four thousand families, which is almost one-third of all families in England.

With respect to another class of men, the inferior clergy, I forbear to enlarge on their condition; but all partialities and prejudices for, or against, different modes and forms of religion aside, common justice will determine, whether there ought to be an income of twenty or thirty pounds a year to one man, and of ten thousand to another. I speak on this subject with the more freedom, because I am known not to be a Presbyterian; and therefore the cant cry of court sycophants, about church and meeting, kept up to amuse and bewilder the nation, cannot be raised against me.

Ye simple men on both sides the question, do you not see through this courtly craft? If ye can be kept disputing and wrangling about church and meeting, ye just answer the purpose of every courtier, who lives the while on the spoil of the taxes, and laughs at your credulity. Every religion is good that teaches man to be good; and I know of none that instructs him to be bad.

All the before-mentioned calculations suppose only sixteen millions and a half of taxes paid into the exchequer, after the expense of collection and drawbacks at the custom-house and excise-office are deducted; whereas the sum paid into the exchequer, is very nearly, if not quite, seventeen millions. The taxes raised in Scotland and Ireland are expended in those countries, and therefore their savings will come out of their own taxes; but if any part be paid into the English exchequer, it might be remitted. This will not make one hundred thousand pounds a year difference.

There now remains only the national debt to be considered. In the year 1789, the interest, exclusive of the tontine, was £9,150,138. How much the capital has been reduced since that time the minister best knows. But after paying the interest, abolishing the tax on houses and windows, the commutation tax and the poor-rates, and making all the provisions for the poor, for the

education of children, the support of the aged, the disbanded part of the army and navy, and increasing the pay of the remainder, there will be a surplus of one million.

The present scheme of paying off the national debt appears to me, speaking as an indifferent person, to be an ill concerted, if not a fallacious job. The burden of the national debt consists not in its being so many millions, or so many hundred millions, but in the quantity of taxes collected every year to pay the interest. If this quantity continues the same, the burden of the national debt is the same to all intents and purposes, be the capital more or less. The only knowledge the public can have of the reduction of the debt, must be through the reduction of taxes for paying the interest. The debt, therefore, is not reduced one farthing to the public by all the millions that have been paid; and it would require more money now to purchase up the capital, than when the scheme began.

Digressing for a moment at this point, to which I shall return again, I look back to the appointment of Mr. Pitt as minister.

I was then in America. The war was over; and though resentment had ceased, memory was still alive.

When the news of the coalition arrived, though it was a matter of no concern to me as a citizen of America, I felt it as a man. It had something in it which shocked, by publicly sporting with decency, if not with principle. It was impudence in Lord North; it was a want of firmness in Mr. Fox.

Mr. Pitt was, at that time, what may be called a maiden character in politics. So far from being hackneyed, he appeared not to be initiated into the first mysteries of court intrigue. Every thing was in his favor. Resentment against the coalition served as friendship to him, and his ignorance of vice was credited for

virtue. With the return of peace, commerce and prosperity would rise of itself; yet even this increase was thrown to his account.

When he came to the helm, the storm was over, and he had nothing to interrupt his course. It required even ingenuity to be wrong, and he succeeded. A little time showed him the same sort of man as his predecessors had been. Instead of profiting by those errors which had accumulated a burden of taxes unparalleled in the world, he sought, I might almost say, he advertised for enemies, and provoked means to increase taxation. Aiming at something, he knew not what, he ransacked Europe and India for adventures, and abandoning the fair pretensions he began with, became the knight-errant of modern times.

It is unpleasant to see character throw itself away. It is more so to see one's self deceived. Mr. Pitt had merited nothing, but he promised much. He gave symptoms of a mind superior to the meanness and corruption of courts. His apparent candor encouraged expectations; and the public confidence, stunned, wearied, and confounded by a chaos of parties, revived and attached itself to him. But mistaking, as he has done, the disgust of the nation against the coalition, for merit in himself, he has rushed into measures, which a man less supported would not have presumed to act.

All this seems to show that change of ministers amounts to nothing. One goes out, another comes in, and still the same measures, vices, and extravagance are pursued. It signifies not who is minister. The defect lies in the system. The foundation and superstructure of the government is bad. Prop it as you please, it continually sinks into court government, and ever will.

I return, as I promised, to the subject of the national debt, that offspring of the Dutch-Anglo revolution, and its handmaid, the Hanover succession.

But it is now too late to inquire how it began. Those to whom it is due have advanced the money; and whether it was well or ill spent, or pocketed, is not their crime. It is, however, easy to see, that as the nation proceeds in contemplating the nature and principles of government, and to understand taxes, and make comparisons between those of America, France, and England, it will be next to impossible to keep it in the same torpid state it has hitherto been. Some reform must, from the necessity of the case, soon begin. It is not whether these principles press with little or much force in the present moment. They are out. They are abroad in the world, and no force can stop them. Like a secret told, they are beyond recall; and he must be blind indeed that does not see that a change is already beginning.

Nine millions of dead taxes is a serious thing; and this not only for bad, but in a great measure for foreign government. By putting the power of making war into the hands of foreigners who came for what they could get, little else was to be expected than what has happened.

Reasons are already advanced in this work, showing that whatever the reforms in the taxes may be, they ought to be made in the current expenses of government, and not in the part applied to the interest of the national debt. By remitting the taxes of the poor, *they* will be totally relieved and all discontent will be taken away; and by striking off such of the taxes as are already mentioned, the nation will more than recover the whole expense of the mad American war.

There will then remain only the national debt as a subject of discontent, and in order to remove, or rather to prevent this, it would be good policy in the stockholders themselves to consider it as property, subject like all otheer property, to bear some portion of the taxes. It would give to it both popularity and security, and, as a great part of its present inconvenience is balanced by

the capital which it keeps alive, a measure of this kind would so far add to that balance as to silence objections.

This may be done by such gradual means as to accomplish all that is necessary with the greatest ease and convenience.

Instead of taxing the capital, the best method would be to tax the interest by some progressive ratio, and to lessen the public taxes in the same proportion as the interest diminished.

Suppose the interest was taxed one halfpenny in the pound the first year, a penny more the second, and to proceed by a certain ratio to be determined upon, always less than any other tax upon property. Such a tax would be subtracted from the interest at the time of payment, without any expense of collection.

One halfpenny in the pound would lessen the interest and consequently the taxes, twenty thousand pounds. The tax on wagons amounts to this sum, and this tax might be taken off the first year. The second year the tax on female servants, or some other of the like amount might also be taken off, and by proceeding in this manner, always applying the tax raised from the property of the debt towards its extinction, and not carrying it to the current services, it would liberate itself.

The stockholders, notwithstanding this tax, would pay less taxes than they do now. What they would save by the extinction of the poor-rates and the tax on houses and windows, and the commutation tax, would be considerably greater than what this tax, slow, but certain in its operation, amounts to.

It appears to me to be prudence to look out for measures that may apply under any circumstance that may approach. There is, at this moment, a crisis in the affairs of Europe that requires it. Preparation now is wisdom. If taxation be once let loose, it will be difficult to rein-

state it; neither would the relief be so effectual, as if it proceeded by some certain and gradual reduction.

The fraud, hypocrisy, and imposition of governments, are now beginning to be too well understood to promise them any longer career. The farce of monarchy and aristocracy, in all countries, is following that of chivalry, and Mr. Burke is dressing for the funeral. Let it then pass quietly to the tomb of all other follies, and the mourners be comforted.

The time is not very distant, when England will laugh at itself for sending to Holland, Hanover, Zell, or Brunswick for men, at the expense of a million a year, who understood neither her laws, her language, nor her interest, and whose capacities would scarcely have fitted them for the office of a parish constable. If government could be trusted to such hands, it must be some easy and simple thing indeed, and materials fit for all the purposes may be found in every town and village in England.

When it shall be said in any country in the world, "My poor are happy; neither ignorance nor distress is to be found among them; my jails are empty of prisoners, my streets of beggars; the aged are not in want, the taxes are not oppressive; the rational world is my friend, because I am a friend of its happiness:" — when these things can be said, then may that country boast of its constitution and its government.

Within the space of a few years we have seen two revolutions, those of America and France. In the former, the contest was long and the conflict severe; in the latter, the nation acted with such a consolidated impulse, that having no foreign enemy to contend with, the revolution was complete in power the moment it appeared. From both those instances it is evident, that the greatest forces that can be brought into the field of revolutions, are reason and common interest. Where these can have the opportunity of acting, opposition dies with fear, or

crumbles away by conviction. It is a great standing which they have now universally obtained; and we may hereafter hope to see revolutions, or changes in governments, produced with the same quiet operation by which any measure, determinable by reason and discussion, is accomplished.

When a nation changes its opinion and habits of thinking, it is no longer to be governed as before; but it would not only be wrong, but bad policy, to attempt by force what ought to be accomplished by reason. Rebellion consists in forcibly opposing the general will of a nation, whether by a party or by a government. There ought, therefore, to be in every nation a method of occasionally ascertaining the state of public opinion with respect to government. On this point the old government of France was superior to the present government of England, because, on extraordinary occasions, recourse could be had to what was then called the States-General. But in England there are no such occasional bodies; and as to those who are now called representatives, a great part of them are mere machines of the court, placemen and dependents.

I presume, that though all the people of England pay taxes, not a hundredth part of them are electors, and the members of one of the houses of parliament represent nobody but themselves. There is, therefore, no power but the voluntary will of the people that has a right to act in any matter respecting a general reform; and by the same right that two persons can confer on such a subject, a thousand may. The object, in all such preliminary proceedings, is to find out what the general sense of a nation is, and to be governed by it. If it prefer a bad or defective government to a reform, or choose to pay ten times more taxes than there is any occasion for, it has a right so to do; and so long as the majority do not impose conditions on the minority, different from

what they impose upon themselves, though there may be much error, there is no injustice. Neither will the error continue long. Reason and discussion will soon bring things right, however wrong they may begin. By such a process no tumult is to be apprehended. The poor, in all countries, are naturally both peaceable and grateful in all reforms in which their interest and happiness are included. It is only by neglecting and rejecting them that they become tumultuous.

The objects that now press on the public attention are, the French revolution, and the prospect of a general revolution in governments. Of all nations in Europe, there is none so much interested in the French revolution as England. Enemies for ages, and that at a vast expense, and without any national object, the opportunity now presents itself of amicably closing the scene, and joining their efforts to reform the rest of Europe. By doing this, they will not only prevent the further effusion of blood, and increase of taxes, but be in a condition of getting rid of a considerable part of their present burdens, as has been already stated. Long experience, however, has shown, that reforms of this kind are not those which old governments wish to promote, and therefore, it is to nations, and not to such governments, that these matters present themselves.

In the preceding part of this work, I have spoken of an alliance between England, France, and America, for purposes that were to be afterwards mentioned. Though I have no direct authority on the part of America, I have good reason to conclude, that she is disposed to enter into a consideration of such a measure, provided that the governments with which she might ally, acted as national governments and not as courts enveloped in intrigue and mystery. That France as a nation and a national government, would prefer an alliance with England, is a matter of certainty. Nations, like individuals, who have long

been enemies, without knowing each other, or knowing why, become better friends when they discover the errors and impositions under which they had acted.

Admitting, therefore, the probability of such a connection, I will state some matters by which such an alliance, together with that of Holland, might render service, not only to the parties immediately concerned, but to all parts of Europe.

It is, I think quite certain, that if the fleets of England, France, and Holland were confederated, they could propose, with effect, a limitation to, and a general dismantling of, all the navies in Europe, to a certain proportion to be agreed upon.

First, That no new ship of war shall be built by any power in Europe, themselves included.

Secondly, That all the navies now in existence shall be put back, suppose to one-tenth of their present force. This will save to France and England, at least two millions annually to each, and their relative force be in the same proportion as it is now. If men will permit themselves to think, as rational beings ought to think, nothing can appear more ridiculous and absurd, exclusive of all moral reflections, than to be at the expense of building navies, filling them with men, and then hauling them into the ocean, to try which can sink each other fastest. Peace, which costs nothing, is attended with infinitely more advantage, than any victory with all its expense. But this, though it best answers the purpose of nations, does not that of court governments, whose habitual policy is pretence for taxation, places, and offices.

It is, I think, also certain, that the above confederated powers, together with that of the United States of America, can propose, with effect, to Spain, the independence of South America, and the opening those countries, of immense extent and wealth to the general commerce of the world, as North America now is.

With how much more glory, and advantage to itself, does a nation act, when it exerts its powers to rescue the world from bondage, and to create to itself friends, than when it employs those powers to increase ruin, desolation, and misery. The horrid scene that is now acting by the English government in the East Indies, is fit only to be told of Goths and Vandals, who, destitute of principle, robbed and tortured the world which they were incapable of enjoying.

The opening of South America would produce an immense field for commerce, and a ready money market for manufactures, which the eastern world does not. The East is already a country of manufactures, the importation of which is not only an injury to the manufactures of England, but a drain upon its specie. The balance against England by this trade is regularly upwards of half a million annually sent out in the East India ships, in silver; and this is the reason, together with German intrigue, and German subsidies, that there is so little silver in England.

But any war is harvest to such governments, however ruinous it may be to a nation. It serves to keep up deceitful expectations, which prevent people from looking into the defects and abuses of government. It is the *lo here!* and the *lo there!* that amuses and cheats the multitude.

Never did so great an opportunity offer itself to England, and to all Europe, as is produced by the two revolutions of America and France. By the former, freedom has a national champion in the western world; and by the latter, in Europe. When another nation shall join France, despotism and bad government will scarcely dare to appear. To use a trite expression, the iron is becoming hot all over Europe. The insulted German and the enslaved Spaniard, the Russ and the Pole are beginning to think. The present age will hereafter merit

to be called the Age of Reason, and the present generation will appear to the future as the Adam of a new world.

When all the governments of Europe shall be established on the representative system, nations will become acquainted, and the animosities and prejudices fomented by the intrigues and artifice of courts, will cease. The oppressed soldier will become a freeman; and the tortured sailor, no longer dragged through the streets like a felon, will pursue his mercantile voyage in safety. It would be better that nations should continue the pay of their soldiers during their lives, and give them their discharge and restore them to freedom and their friends, and cease recruiting, than retain such multitudes at the same expense, in a condition useless to society and to themselves. As soldiers have hitherto been treated in most countries, they might be said to be without a friend. Shunned by the citizen on an apprehension of their being enemies to liberty, and too often insulted by those who commanded them, their condition was a double oppression. But where genuine principles of liberty pervade a people, every thing is restored to order; and the soldier civilly treated, returns the civility.

In contemplating revolutions, it is easy to perceive that they may arise from two distinct causes; the one, to avoid or get rid of some great calamity, the other, to obtain some great and positive good; and the two may be distinguished by the names of active and passive revolutions. In those which proceed from the former cause, the temper becomes incensed and soured; and the redress, obtained by danger, is too often sullied by revenge. But in those which proceed from the latter, the heart, rather animated than agitated, enters serenely upon the subject. Reason and discussion, persuasion and conviction, become the weapons in the contest, and it is only when those are attempted to be suppressed that

recourse is had to violence. When men unite in agreeing that a *thing is good*, could it be obtained, such as relief from a burden of taxes and the extinction of corruption, the object is more than half accomplished. What they approve as the end, they will promote in the means.

Will any man say in the present excess of taxation, falling so heavily on the poor, that a remission of five pounds annually of taxes to one hundred and four thousand poor families is not a *good thing?* Will he say that a remission of seven pounds annually to one hundred thousand other poor families; of eight pounds annually to another hundred thousand poor families, and of ten pounds annually to fifty thousand poor and widowed families, are not *good things?* And, to proceed a step further in this climax, will he say, that to provide against the misfortunes to which all human life is subject, by securing six pounds annually for all poor, distressed, and reduced persons of the age of fifty and until sixty, and of ten pounds annually after sixty, is not a *good thing?*

Will he say, that an abolition of two millions of poor-rates to the housekeepers, and of the whole of the house and window-light tax and of the commutation tax, is not a *good thing?* Or will he say, that to abolish corruption is a *bad thing?*

If, therefore, the good to be obtained be worthy of a passive, rational, and costless revolution, it would be bad policy to prefer waiting for a calamity that should force a violent one. I have no idea, considering the reforms which are now passing and spreading throughout Europe, that England will permit herself to be the last; and where the occasion and the opportunity quietly offer, it is better than to wait for a turbulent necessity. It may be considered as an honor to the animal faculties of man to obtain redress by courage and danger, but it is far greater honor to the rational faculties to accomplish the

same object by reason, accommodation, and general consent.*

As reforms, or revolutions, call them which you please, extend themselves among nations, those nations will form connections and conventions, and when a few are thus confederated, the progress will be rapid, till despotism and corrupt government be totally expelled, at least out of two quarters of the world, Europe and America. The Algerine piracy may then be commanded to cease, for it is only by the malicious policy of old governments against each other that it exists.

Throughout this work, various and numerous as the subjects are, which I have taken up and investigated, there is only a single paragraph upon religion, *viz.* "*that every religion is good, that teaches man to be good.*"

I have carefully avoided to enlarge upon the subject, because I am inclined to believe, that what is called the present ministry, wish to see contentions about religion kept up, to prevent the nation turning its attention to subjects of government. It is as if they were to say, "*look that way, or any way but this.*"

But as religion is very improperly made a political machine, and the reality of it is thereby destroyed, I will conclude this work with stating in what light religion appears to me.

*I know it is the opinion of many of the most enlightened characters in France, (there always will be those who see further into events than others,) not only among the general mass of citizens, but of many of the principal members of the former National Assembly, that the monarchical plan will not continue many years in that country. They have found out, that, as wisdom cannot be made hereditary, power ought not; and that for a man to merit a million sterling a year from a nation, he ought to have a mind capable of comprehending from an atom to a universe, which, if he had, he would be above receiving the pay. But they wished not to appear to lead the nation faster than its own reason and interest dictated. In all the conversations where I have been present upon this subject, the idea always was, that when such a time, from the general opinion of the nation, shall arrive, that the honorable and liberal method would be, to make a handsome present in fee simple to the person, whoever he may be, that shall then be in the monarchical office, and for him to retire to the enjoyment of private life, possessing his share of general rights and privileges, and to be no more accountable to the public for his time and his conduct than any other citizen.

If we suppose a large family of children, who, on any particular day, or particular occasion, made it a custom to present to their parents some token of their affection and gratitude, each of them would make a different offering, and most probably in a different manner. Some would pay their congratulations in themes of verse and prose, by some little devices, as their genius dictated, or according to what they thought would please; and, perhaps, the least of all, not able to do any of those things, would ramble into the garden, or the field, and gather what it thought the prettiest flower it could find, though, perhaps, it might be but a simple weed. The parents would be more gratified by such a variety, than if the whole of them had acted on a concerted plan, and each had made exactly the same offering. This would have the cold appearance of contrivance, or the harsh one of control. But of all unwelcome things, nothing would more afflict the parent than to know, that the whole of them had afterwards gotten together by the ears, boys and girls, fighting, reviling, and abusing each other about which was the best or the worst present.

Why may we not suppose that the great Father of all is pleased with variety of devotion; and that the greatest offence we can act is that by which we seek to torment and render each other miserable? For my own part I am fully satisfied that what I am now doing, with an endeavor to conciliate mankind, to render their condition happy, to unite nations that have hitherto been enemies, and to extirpate the horrid practice of war and break the chains of slavery and oppression, is acceptable in his sight, and being the best service I can perform I act it cheerfully.

I do not believe that any two men, on what are called doctrinal points, think alike who think at all. It is only those who have not thought that appear to agree. It is in this case as with what is called the British constitution:

it has been taken for granted to be good, and encomiums have supplied the place of proof. But when the nation comes to examine into its principles and the abuses it admits, it will be found to have more defects than I have pointed out in this work and the former.

As to what are called national religions, we may, with as much propriety, talk of national gods. It is either political craft or the remains of the pagan system, when every nation had its separate and particular deity.

Among all the writers of the English church clergy, who have treated on the general subject of religion, the present bishop of Landaff has not been excelled, and it is with much pleasure that I take this opportunity of expressing this token of respect.

I have now gone through the whole of the subject, at least, as far as it appears to me at present.

It has been my intention for the five years I have been in Europe to offer an address to the people of England on the subject of government, if the opportunity presented itself before I returned to America. Mr. Burke has thrown it in my way, and I thank him. On a certain occasion, three years ago, I pressed him to propose a national convention, to be fairly elected, for the purpose of taking the state of the nation into consideration; but I found that however strongly the parliamentary current was then setting against the party he acted with, their policy was to keep every thing within that field of corruption, and trust to accidents. Long experience had shown that parliaments would follow any change of ministers, and on this they rested their hopes and their expectations.

Formerly, when divisions arose respecting governments, recourse was had to the sword, and a civil war ensued. That savage custom is exploded by the new system, and reference is had to national conventions. Discussion and the general will arbitrates the question,

and to this private opinion yields with a good grace, and order is preserved uninterrupted.

Some gentlemen have affected to call the principles upon which this work and the former part of the *Rights of Man* are founded, "a new fangled doctrine." The question is not whether these principles are new or old, but whether they are right or wrong. Suppose the former, I will show their effect by a figure easily understood.

It is now towards the middle of February. Were I to take a turn into the country, the trees would present a leafless, wintery appearance. As people are apt to pluck twigs as they go along, I perhaps might do the same, and by chance might observe, that a *single bud* on that twig has begun to swell. I should reason very unnaturally, or rather not reason at all, to suppose *this* was the *only* bud in England which had this appearance. Instead of deciding thus, I should instantly conclude, that the same appearance was beginning, or about to begin, every where; and though the vegetable sleep will continue longer on some trees and plants than on others, and though some of them may not *blossom* for two or three years, all will be in leaf in the summer, except those which are *rotten*. What pace the political summer may keep with the natural, no human foresight can determine. It is, however, not difficult to perceive that the spring is begun.

Thus wishing, as I sincerely do, freedom and happiness to all nations, I close the SECOND PART.

APPENDIX.

AS the publication of this work has been delayed beyond the time intended, I think it not improper, all circumstances considered, to state the causes that have occasioned that delay.

The reader will probably observe, that some parts in the plan contained in this work for reducing the taxes, and certain parts in Mr. Pitt's speech at the opening of the present session, Tuesday, January 31, are so much alike, as to induce a belief, that either the author had taken the hint from Mr. Pitt, or Mr. Pitt from the author. I will first point out the parts that are similar, and then state such circumstances as I am acquainted with, leaving the reader to make his own conclusion.

Considering it as almost an unprecedented case, that taxes should be proposed to be taken off, it is equally extraordinary that such a measure should occur to two persons at the same time; and still more so (considering the vast variety and multiplicity of taxes) that they should hit on the same specific taxes. Mr. Pitt has mentioned, in his speech, the tax on *carts and wagons;* that on *female servants;* the lowering the tax on *candles,* and the taking off the tax of three shillings on *houses* having under seven windows.

Every one of those specific taxes are a part of the plan contained in this work, and proposed also to be taken off. Mr. Pitt's plan, it is true, goes no further than to a reduction of three hundred and twenty thousand pounds; and the reduction proposed in this work, to nearly six millions. I have made my calculations on only sixteen

millions and an half of revenue, still asserting that it was very nearly, if not quite, seventeen millions. Mr. Pitt states it at £16,690,000. I know enough of the matter to say, that he has not *over*stated it. Having thus given the particulars, which correspond in this work and his speech, I will state a chain of circumstances that may lead to some explanation.

The first hint for lessening the taxes, and that as a consequence flowing from the French revolution, is to be found in the *Address and Declaration* of the gentlemen who met at the Thatched-House tavern, August 20, 1791. Among many other particulars stated in that address, is the following, put as an interrogation to the government opposers of the French revolution. "*Are they sorry that the pretence for new oppressive taxes, and the occasion for continuing many old taxes will be at an end?*"

It is well known, that the persons who chiefly frequent the Thatched-House tavern, are men of court connections, and so much did they take this address and declaration respecting the French revolution and the reduction of taxes, in disgust, that the landlord was under the necessity of informing the gentlemen, who composed the meeting of the 20th of August, and who proposed holding another meeting, that he could not receive them.*

What was only hinted in the address and declaration respecting taxes and principles of government, will be found reduced to a regular system in this work. But as Mr. Pitt's speech contains some of the same things

* The gentleman who signed the *Address and Declaration* as chairman of the meeting, Mr. Horne Tooke, being generally supposed to be the person who drew it up, and having spoken much in commendation of it, has been jocularly accused of praising his own work. To free him from this embarrassment, and to save him the repeated trouble of mentioning the author, as he had not failed to do, I make no hesitation in saying, that as the opportunity of benefiting by the French revolution easily occurred to me, I drew up the publication in question, and showed it to him and some other gentlemen; who fully approving it, held a meeting for the purpose of making it public, and subscribed to the amount of fifty guineas to defray the expense of advertising. I believe there are at this time in England a greater number of men acting on disinterested principles and determined to look into the nature and practices of government themselves, and not blindly trust, as has hitherto been the case either to government generally, or to parliaments, or to parliamentary opposition, than at any former period. Had this been done a century ago, corruption and taxation had not arrived to the height they are now at.

respecting taxes, I now come to give the circumstances before alluded to.

The case is this: This work was intended to be published just before the meeting of parliament, and for that purpose a considerable part of the copy was put into the printer's hands in September, and all the remaining copy, as far as page 160, which contains the part to which Mr. Pitt's speech is similar, was given to him full six weeks before the meeting of parliament, and he was informed of the time at which it was to appear. He had composed nearly the whole about a fortnight before the time of parliament's meeting, and had printed as far as page 112, and had given me a proof of the next sheet, up to page 128. It was then in sufficient forwardness to be out at the time proposed, as two other sheets were ready for striking off. I had before told him, that if he thought he should be straitened for time, I could get part of the work done at another press, which he desired me not to do. In this manner the work stood on the Tuesday fortnight preceding the meeting of parliament, when all at once, without any previous intimation, though I had been with him the evening before, he sent me by one of his workmen, all the remaining copy, from page 112, declining to go on with the work *on any consideration.*

To account for this extraordinary conduct I was totally at a loss, as he stopped at the part where the arguments on systems and principles of government closed, and where the plan for the reduction of taxes, the education of children, and the support of the poor and the aged begins; and still more especially, as he had, at the time of his beginning to print, and before he had seen the whole copy, offered a thousand pounds for the copy-right, together with the future copy-right of the former part of the *Rights of Man.* I told the person who brought me this offer that I should not accept it, and wished it not to be renewed, giving him as my reason, that though I

believed the printer to be an honest man, I would never put it in the power of any printer or publisher to suppress or alter a work of mine, by making him master of the copy, or give to him the right of selling it to any minister, or to any other person, or to treat as a mere matter of traffic, that which I intended should operate as a principle.

His refusal to complete the work (which he could not purchase) obliged me to seek for another printer, and this of consequence would throw the publication back till after the meeting of parliament, otherwise it would have appeared that Mr. Pitt had only taken up a part of the plan which I had more fully stated.

Whether that gentleman, or any other, had seen the work or any part of it, is more than I have authority to say. But the manner in which the work was returned, and the particular time at which this was done, and that after the offers he had made, are suspicious circumstances. I know what the opinion of booksellers and publishers is upon such a case, but as to my own opinion, I choose to make no declaration. There are many ways by which proof sheets may be procured by other persons before a work publicly appears; to which I shall add a certain circumstance, which is,

A ministerial bookseller in Piccadilly who has been employed, as common report says, by a clerk of one of the boards closely connected with the ministry (the board of trade and plantations, of which Hawksbury is president,) to publish what he calls my Life, (I wish his own life and that those of the cabinet were as good,) used to have his books printed at the same printing office that I employed; but when the former part of the *Rights of Man* came out, he took his work away in dudgeon; and about a week or ten days before the printer returned my copy, he came to make him an offer of his work again, which was accepted. This would consequently give him admission into the printing office where the sheets of this

work were then lying; and as booksellers and printers are free with each other, he would have the opportunity of seeing what was going on. Be the case, however, as it may, Mr. Pitt's plan, little and diminutive as it is, would have made a very awkward appearance, had this work appeared at the time the printer had engaged to finish it.

I have now stated the particulars which occasioned the delay, from the proposal to purchase, to the refusal to print. If all the gentlemen are innocent, it is very unfortunate for them that such a variety of suspicious circumstances should, without any design, arrange themselves together.

Having now finished this part, I will conclude with stating another circumstance.

About a fortnight or three weeks before the meeting of parliament, a small addition, amounting to about twelve shillings and sixpence a year, was made to the pay of the soldiers, or rather their pay was docked so much less. Some gentlemen who knew in part, that this work would contain a plan of reforms respecting the oppressed condition of soldiers, wished me to add a note to the work, signifying that the part upon that subject had been in the printer's hands some weeks before that addition of pay was proposed. I declined doing this, lest it should be interpreted into an air of vanity, or an endeavor to excite suspicion (for which perhaps there might be no grounds) that some of the government gentlemen had, by some means or other, made out what this work would contain; and had not the printing been interrupted so as to occasion a delay beyond the time fixed for publication, nothing contained in this appendix would have appeared.

THOMAS PAINE.

END OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN.

LETTER TO THE ABBÉ SIÉYÈS.

Paris, 8th July, 1792.

SIR:

AT the moment of my departure for England, I read, in the *Moniteur* of Tuesday last, your letter, in which you give the challenge, on the subject of Government, and offer to defend what is called the *Monarchical opinion* against the Republican system.

I accept of your challenge with pleasure; and I place such a confidence in the superiority of the Republican system over that nullity of a system, called *Monarchy*, that I engage not to exceed the extent of fifty pages, and to leave you the liberty of taking as much latitude as you may think proper.

The respect which I bear your moral and literary reputation, will be your security for my candor in the course of this discussion; but, notwithstanding that I shall treat the subject seriously and sincerely, let me premise, that I consider myself at liberty to ridicule as they deserve, Monarchical absurdities, whensoever the occasion shall present itself.

By Republicanism, I do not understand what the name signifies in Holland, and in some parts of Italy. I understand simply a government by representation—a government founded upon the principles of the Declaration of Rights; principles to which several parts of the French Constitution arise in contradiction. The Declarations of the Rights of France and America are but one and the same thing in principles, and almost in expressions; and this is the Republicanism which I undertake to defend against what is called *Monarchy* and *Aristocracy*.

I see with pleasure, that in respect to one point we are already agreed ; and *that is, the extreme danger of a civil list of thirty millions.* I can discover no reason why one of the parts of the government should be supported with so extravagant a profusion, whilst the other scarcely receives what is sufficient for its common wants.

This dangerous and dishonorable disproportion, at once supplies the one with the means of corrupting, and throws the other into the predicament of being corrupted. In America there is but little difference, with regard to this point, between the legislative and the executive part of our government ; but the first is much better attended to than it is in France.*

In whatsoever manner, Sir, I may treat the subject of which you have proposed the investigation, I hope that you will not doubt my entertaining for you the highest esteem. I must also add, that I am not the personal enemy of Kings. Quite the contrary. No man more heartly wishes than myself to see them all in the happy and honorable state of private individuals ; but I am the avowed, open, and intrepid enemy of what is called Monarchy, and I am such by principles which nothing can either alter or corrupt, — by my attachment to humanity — by the anxiety which I feel within myself for the dignity and the honor of the human race — by the disgust which I experience, when I observe men directed by children and governed by brutes — by the horror which all the evils that Monarchy has spread over the earth excite within my breast — and by those sentiments which make me shudder at the calamities, the exactions, the wars, and the massacres with which Monarchy has crushed mankind. In short, it is against all the hell of Monarchy that I have declared war.

THOMAS PAINE.

* A Deputy to the Congress receives about a guinea and a half daily ; and provisions are cheaper in America than in France.

TO THE AUTHORS OF "THE REPUBLICAN."

GENTLEMEN:

M. DUCHASTELET has mentioned to me the intention of some persons to commence a work under the title of *The Republican.*

As I am a citizen of a country which knows no other majesty than that of the people — no other government than that of the representative body — no other sovereignty than that of the laws, and which is attached to *France* both by alliance and by gratitude, I voluntarily offer you my services in support of principles as honorable to a nation as they are adapted to promote the happiness of mankind. I offer them to you with the more zeal, as I know the moral, literary and political character of those who are engaged in the undertaking, and find myself honored in their good opinion.

But I must at the same time observe, that from ignorance of the French language, my works must necessarily undergo a translation; they can of course be of but little utility, and my offering must consist more of wishes than services. I must add, that I am obliged to pass a part of this summer in England and Ireland.

As the public has done me the unmerited favor of recognizing me under the appellation of *Common Sense*, which is my usual signature, I shall continue it in this publication to avoid mistakes, and to prevent my being supposed the author of works not my own. As to my

political principles, I shall endeavor, in this letter, to trace their general features in such a manner as that they cannot be misunderstood.

It is desirable in most instances to avoid that which may give even the least suspicion as to the part meant to be adopted, and particularly on the present occasion, where a perfect clearness of expression is necessary to the avoidance of any possible misinterpretation. I am happy, therefore, to find that the work in question is entitled *The Republican.* This word expresses perfectly the idea which we ought to have of government in general — *res-republica* — the public affairs of a nation.

As to the word *monarchy*, though the address and intrigue of courts have rendered it familiar, it does not contain the less of reproach or of insult to a nation. The word, in its immediate and original sense, signifies *the absolute power of a single individual*, who may prove a fool, an hypocrite, or a tyrant. The appellation admits of no other interpretation than that which is here given. France is therefore not a *monarchy;* it is insulted when called by that name. The servile spirit which characterizes this species of government is banished from France, and this country, like America, can now afford to monarchy no more than a glance of disdain.

Of the errors which monarchical ignorance or knavery has spread through the world, the one which bears the marks of the most dexterous invention, is the opinion that the system of *republicanism* is only adapted to a small country, and that a *monarchy* is suited, on the contrary, to those of greater extent. Such is the language of courts, and such the sentiments which they have caused to be adopted in monarchical countries; but the opinion is contrary at the same time to principle and to experience.

The government, to be of real use, should possess a complete knowledge of all the parties — all the circum-

stances and all the interests of a nation. The monarchical system, in consequence, instead of being suited to a country of great extent, would be more admissible in a small territory, where an individual may be supposed to know the affairs and the interests of the whole. But when it is attempted to extend this individual knowledge to the affairs of a great country, the capacity of knowing bears no longer any proportion to the extent or multiplicity of the objects which ought to be known, and the government inevitably falls from ignorance into tyranny. For the proof of this position we need only look to Spain, Russia, Germany, Turkey, and the whole of the eastern continent.—Countries for the deliverance of which I offer my most sincere wishes.

On the contrary, the true *republican* system, by election and representation, offers the only means which are known, and, in my opinion, the only means which are possible, of proportioning the wisdom and the information of a government to the extent of a country.

The system of *representation* is the strongest and most powerful centre that can be devised for a nation. Its attraction acts so powerfully, that men give it their approbation even without reasoning on the cause; and France, however distant its several parts, finds itself at this moment *a whole*, in its *central* representation. The citizen is assured that his rights are protected, and the soldier feels that he is no longer the slave of a despot, but that he is become one of the nation, and interested of course in its defence.

The states at present styled *republican*, as Holland, Genoa, Venice, Berne, &c., are not only unworthy of the name, but are actually in opposition to every principle of a *republican* government, and the countries submitted to their power are, truly speaking, subject to an *aristocratic* slavery.

It is, perhaps, impossible, in the first steps which are

made in a revolution, to avoid all kind of error, in principle or in practice, or in some instances to prevent the combination of both. Before the sense of a nation is sufficiently enlightened, and before men have entered into the habits of a free communication with each other of their natural thoughts, a certain reserve — a timid prudence seizes on the human mind, and prevents it from attaining its level with that vigor and promptitude that belongs to *right*. — An example of this influence discovers itself in the commencement of the present revolution : but happily this discovery has been made before the constitution was completed, and in time to provide a remedy.

The *hereditary succession* can never exist as a matter of *right;* it is a *nullity* — a *nothing*. To admit the idea, is to regard man as a species of property belonging to some individuals, either born or to be born ! It is to consider our descendants and all posterity as mere animals, without a right or a will ! It is, in fine, the most base and humiliating idea that ever degraded the human species, and which, for the honor of humanity, should be destroyed forever.

The idea of hereditary succession is so contrary to the rights of man, that if we were ourselves to be recalled to existence, instead of being replaced by our posterity, we should not have the right of depriving ourselves beforehand of those rights which would then properly belong to us. On what ground, then, or by what authority, do we dare to deprive of their rights those children who will soon be men? Why are we not struck with the injustice which we perpetrate on our descendants, by endeavoring to transmit them as a vile herd, to masters whose vices are all that can be foreseen.

Whenever the French constitution shall be rendered conformable to its declaration of rights, we shall then be enabled to give to France, and with justice, the appella-

tion of a *civic empire*; for its government will be the empire of laws, founded on the great republican principles of *elective representation* and the rights of man.—But monarchy and hereditary succession are incompatible with the *basis* of its constitution.

I hope that I have at present sufficiently proved to you that I am a good republican; and I have such a confidence in the truth of these principles, that I doubt not they will soon be as universal in France as in America. The pride of human nature will assist their evidence, will contribute to their establishment, and men will be ashamed of monarchy.

I am, with respect,
Gentlemen,
Your friend,
THOMAS PAINE.

Paris, June, 1791.

LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE ADDRESSERS ON THE LATE PROCLAMATION.

COULD I have commanded circumstances with a wish, I know not of any that would have more generally promoted the progress of knowledge than the late proclamation, and the numerous rotten-borough and corporation addresses thereon. They have not only served as advertisements, but they have excited a spirit of inquiry into principles of government, and a desire to read the *Rights of Man* in places where that spirit and that work were before unknown.

The people of England, wearied and stunned with parties, and alternately deceived by each, had almost resigned the prerogative of thinking. Even curiosity had expired, and a universal languor had spread itself over the land. The opposition was visibly no other than a contest for power, whilst the mass of the nation stood torpidly by as the prize.

In this hopeless state of things, the first part of the *Rights of Man* made its appearance. It had to combat with a strange mixture of prejudice and indifference ; it stood exposed to every species of newspaper abuse ; and besides this, it had to remove the obstructions which Mr. Burke's rude and outrageous attack on the French revolution had artfully raised.

But how easy does even the most illiterate reader distinguish the spontaneous effusions of the heart from the labored productions of the brain ! Truth, whenever it can fully appear, is a thing so naturally familiar to the

mind, that an acquaintance commences at first sight. No artificial light, yet discovered, can display all the properties of daylight; so neither can the best invented fiction fill the mind with every conviction which truth begets.

To overthrow Mr. Burke's fallacious book was scarcely the operation of a day. Even the phalanx of placemen and pensioners, who had given the tone to the multitude, by clamoring forth his political fame, became suddenly silent; and the final event to himself has been, that as he rose like a rocket, he fell like the stick.

It seldom happens that the mind rests satisfied with the simple detection of error or imposition. Once put in motion, *that* motion soon becomes accelerated; where it had intended to stop, it discovers new reasons to proceed, and renews and continues the pursuit far beyond the limits it first prescribed to itself. Thus it has happened to the people of England. From a detection of Mr. Burke's incoherent rhapsodies and distorted facts, they began an inquiry into the first principles of government, whilst himself, like an object left far behind, became invisible and forgotten.

Much as the first part of the *Rights of Man* impressed at its first appearance, the progressive mind soon discovered that it did not go far enough. It detected errors—it exposed absurdities—it shook the fabric of political superstition—it generated new ideas; but it did not produce a regular system of principles in the room of those which it displaced. And, if I may guess at the mind of the government party, they beheld it as an unexpected gale that would soon blow over, and they forbore, like sailors in threatening weather, to whistle, lest they should increase the wind. Every thing, on their part, was profound silence.

When the second part of the *Rights of Man*, *combining principles and practice*, was preparing to appear,

they affected, for a while, to act with the same policy as before; but finding their silence had no more influence in stifling the progress of the work than it would have in stopping the progress of time, they changed their plan, and affected to treat it with clamorous contempt. The speech-making placemen and pensioners and place expectants, in both houses of parliament, the *outs* as well as the *ins*, represented it as a silly, insignificant performance; as a work incapable of producing any effect; as something which they were sure the good sense of the people would either despise or indignantly spurn; but such was the overstrained awkwardness with which they harangued and encouraged each other, that in the very act of declaring their confidence they betrayed their fears.

As most of the rotten-borough addressers are obscured in holes and corners throughout the country, and to whom a newspaper arrives as rarely as an almanac, they most probably have not had an opportunity of knowing how far this part of the farce (the original prelude to all the addresses) has been acted. For *their* information, I will suspend a while the more serious purpose of my letter, and entertain them with two or three speeches in the last session of parliament, which will serve them for politics till parliament meets again.

You must know, gentlemen, that the second part of the *Rights of Man* (the part against which you have been presenting addresses, though it is most probable that many of you did not know it) was to have come out precisely at the time that parliament last met. It happened not to be published till a few days after. But as it was well known that the book would shortly appear, the parliamentary orators entered into a very cordial coalition to cry the book down, and they began their attack by crying up the *blessings* of the constitution.

Had it been your fate to have been there, it would

have been impossible not to have been moved at the heart-and-pocket-felt congratulations that passed between all the parties on this subject of *blessings;* for the *outs* enjoy places and pensions and sinecures as well as the *ins*, and are as devoutly attached to the firm of the house.

One of the most conspicuous of this motley group is the clerk of the court of king's bench, who calls himself Lord Stormont. He is also called justice-general of Scotland, and keeper of Scoon (an opposition man), and he draws from the public for these nominal offices, not less, as I am informed, than six thousand pounds a year, and he is, most probably, at the trouble of counting the money, and signing a receipt, to show, perhaps, that he is qualified to be clerk as well as justice. He spoke as follows :*

"That *we* shall *all* be unanimous in expressing *our* attachment to the constitution of these realms, *I am confident.* It is a subject upon which there can be *no* divided opinion *in this house.* I do not pretend to be deep read in the knowledge of the constitution, but I take upon me to say, that from the extent of *my* knowledge [for I have so many thousands a year for nothing] it appears to *me* that from the period of the revolution, for it was by no means created then, it has been, both in *theory* and *practice*, the *wisest* system that ever was formed. I never was [he means he never was *till now*] a dealer in *political cant.* My life has not been occupied in *that way*, but the speculations of late years *seem to have taken a turn, for which I cannot account.* When I came into public life, the political pamphlets of the time, however they might be charged with the heat and violence of parties, were agreed in extolling the radical beauties of the constitution itself. I remember [he means he has forgotten] a most captivating eulogium on its *charms* by Lord Bolingbroke, where he recommends

* See his speech in the *Morning Chronicle* of Feb. 1.

his readers to contemplate it in all respects, with the assurance that it would be found more estimable the more it was *seen*. I do *not recollect* his precise words, but I wish that men who write upon these subjects would take *this for their model*, instead of the political pamphlets, which, I am told are now in circulation [such, I suppose, as the *Rights of Man*] ; pamphlets which I have *not read*, and whose purport I know only by *report*. [He means, perhaps, by the *noise* they make.] This, however, I am sure, that pamphlets tending to unsettle the public reverence for the constitution will have very little influence. They can do very little harm ; for [by the way, he is no dealer in political cant] *the English are a sober thinking people, and are more intelligent, more solid, more steady in their opinions, than any people I ever had the fortune to see*. [This is pretty well laid on, though, for a new beginner.] But if there should ever come a time when the propagation of those doctrines should agitate the public mind, I am *sure* for *every one* of your lordships, that no attack will be made on the constitution, from which it is truly said that *we* derive *all our* prosperity, without raising *every one* of your lordships to its support. It will then be found that there is no difference among *us*, but that *we* are *all* determined to *stand* or *fall* together, in defence of the inestimable system " — of places and pensions.

After Stormont, on the opposition side, sat down, up rose *another noble lord!* on the ministerial side, Grenville. This man ought to be as strong in the back as a mule, or the *sire* of a mule, or it would crack with the weight of places and offices. He rose, however, without feeling any incumbrance, full master of his weight ; and thus said *this* noble lord to *t'other* noble lord !

" The *patriotic* and *manly* manner in which the noble lord has declared *his* sentiments on the subject of the constitution, demands *my cordial* approbation. The

noble viscount has *proved*, that however we may differ on *particular measures*, amidst all the jars and dissonance of *parties*, we are unanimous in *principle*. There is a perfect and entire consent [between *us*] in the love and maintenance of the constitution as *happily subsisting*. It must undoubtedly give your lordships *concern*, to find that the *time is come!* [heigh ho] when there is *propriety* in these expressions of regard to [o! o! o!] THE CONSTITUTION. And that there are men [confound — their — politics] who disseminate doctrines *hostile* to the *genuine spirit* of our *well-balanced system*. [It is certainly a well-balanced system, when both sides hold places and pensions at once.] I agree with the noble viscount that they have not [I hope] much success. I am convinced that there is no danger to be apprehended from their attempts; but it is *truly* important and *consolatory* [to us placemen, I suppose] to know, that if ever there should arise a serious alarm, there is but one *spirit*, *one sense* [and that sense I presume is not *common sense*] and *one* determination in *this house*"— which undoubtedly is to hold all their places and pensions as long as they can.

Both those speeches (except the parts enclosed in brackets, which are added for the purpose of *illustration*) are copied *verbatim* from the *Morning Chronicle* of the 1st of February last; and when the situation of the speakers is considered, the one in the opposition, and the other in the ministry, and both of them living at the public expense, by sinecure, or nominal places and offices, it required a very unblushing front to be able to deliver them. Can those men seriously suppose any nation to be so completely blind as not to see through them? Can Stormont believe that the *political cant*, with which he has larded his harangue, will conceal the craft? Does he not know that there never was a cover large enough to conceal *itself?* Or can Grenville be-

live, that his credit with the public increases with his avarice for places?

But, if these orators will accept a service from me, in return for the allusions they have made to the *Rights of Man*, I will make a speech for either of them to deliver on the excellence of the constitution, that shall be as much to the purpose as what they have spoken, or of Bolingbroke's captivating eulogium. Here it is:

"That we shall all be unanimous in expressing our attachment to the constitution, I am confident. It is, my lords, incomprehensibly good: but the great wonder of all is the wisdom; for it is, my lords, *the wisest system that ever was formed.*

"With respect to us, noble lords, though the world does not know it, it is very well known to us, that we have more wisdom than we know what to do with; and what is still better, my lords, we have it all in stock. I defy your lordships to prove, that a tittle of it has been used yet; and if we but go on, my lords, with the frugality we have hitherto done, we shall leave to our heirs and successors, when we go out of the world, the whole stock of wisdom *untouched*, that we brought in; and there is no doubt but they will follow our example. This, my lords, is one of the blessed effects of the hereditary system; for we can never be without wisdom so long as we keep it by us, and do not use it.

"But, my lords, as all this wisdom is hereditary property, for the sole benefit of us and our heirs, and it is necessary that the people should know where to get a supply for their own use, the excellence of our constitution has provided us a king for this very purpose, and for *no other*. But, my lords, I perceive a defect to which the constitution is subject, and which I propose to remedy by bringing a bill into parliament for that purpose.

"The constitution, my lords, out of delicacy, I presume, has left it as a matter of *choice* to a king whether

he will be wise or not. It has not, I mean, my lords, insisted upon it as a constitutional point, which, I conceive, it ought to have done; for I pledge myself to your lordships to prove, and that with *true patriotic boldness*, that he has *no choice in the matter*. This bill, my lords, which I shall bring in, will be to declare, that the constitution, according to the true intent and meaning thereof, does not invest the king with this choice; our ancestors were too wise to do that; and, in order to prevent any doubts that might otherwise arise, I shall prepare, my lords, an enacting clause, to fix the wisdom of kings by act of parliament; and then, my lords, our constitution will be the wonder of the world!

"Wisdom, my lords, is the one thing needful: but that there may be no mistake in this matter, and that we may proceed consistently with the true wisdom of the constitution, I shall propose a *certain criterion* whereby the *exact quantity of wisdom* necessary for a king may be known. [Here should be a cry of "Hear him! Hear him!"]

"It is recorded, my lords, in the Statutes at large of the Jews, 'a book, my lords, which I have not read, and whose purport I know only by report,' *but perhaps the bench of bishops can recollect something about it*, that Saul gave the most convincing proofs of royal wisdom before he was made a king, *for he was sent to seek his father's asses and he could not find them.*

"Here, my lords, we have, most happily for us, a case in point: this precedent ought to be established by act of parliament; and every king, before he be crowned, should be sent to seek his father's asses, and if he cannot find them, he shall be declared wise enough to be king, according to the true meaning of our excellent constitution. All, therefore, my lords, that will be necessary to be done, by the enacting clause that I shall bring in, will be to invest the king beforehand with the

quantity of wisdom necessary for this purpose, lest he should happen not to possess it ; and this, my lords, we can do without making use of any of our own.

"We further read, my lords, in the said Statutes at large of the Jews, that Samuel, who certainly was as mad as any man-of-rights-man now-a-days, (hear him ! hear him !), was displeased and even exasperated at the proposal of the Jews to have a king, and he warned them against it with all that assurance and impudence of which he was master. I have been, my lords, at the trouble of going all the way to Paternoster-row to procure an extract from the printed copy. I was told that I should meet with it there, or in Amen-corner, for I was then going, my lords, to rummage for it among the curiosities of the Antiquarian Society. I will read the extract to your lordships, to show how little Samuel knew of the matter.

"The extract, my lords, is from 1 Sam., chap. viii.

"'And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him a king.

"'And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you. He will take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen ; and some shall run before his chariots.

"'And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties, and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots.

"'And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers.

"'And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants.

"'And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants.

"'And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work.

"'And he will take the tenth of your sheep, and ye shall be his servants.

"'And ye shall cry out in that day, because of your king, which ye shall have chosen you ; and the lord will not hear you on that day.'

"Now, my lords, what can we think of this man Samuel? Is there a word of truth, or any thing like truth, in all that he has said? He pretended to be a prophet, or a wise man, but has not the event proved him to be a fool, or an incendiary? Look around you, my lords, and see if anything has happened that he pretended to foretell? Has not the most profound peace reigned throughout the world ever since kings were in fashion? Are not, for example, the present kings of Europe the most peaceable of mankind, and the empress of Russia the very milk of human kindness? It would not be worth having kings, my lords, if it were not that they never go to war.

If we look at home, my lords, do we not see the same things here as are seen every where else? Are our young men taken to be horsemen, or foot soldiers, any more than in Germany, or in Prussia, or in Hanover, or in Hesse? Are not our sailors as safe on land as at sea? Are they ever dragged from their homes, like oxen to the slaughter-house, to serve on board ships of war? When they return from the perils of a long voyage with the merchandise of distant countries, does not every man sit down under his own vine and his own fig-tree, in perfect security? Is the tenth of our seed taken by tax-gatherers, or is any part of it given to the king's servants? In short, *is not every thing as free from taxes as the light from Heaven?*

"Ah! my lords, do we not see the blessed effect of

having kings in every thing we look at? Is not the G. R., or the broad R., stamped upon every thing? Even the shoes, the gloves and the hats that we wear are enriched with the impression, and all our candles blaze a burnt-offering.

"Besides these blessings, my lords, that cover us from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, do we not see a race of youths growing up to be kings, who are the very paragons of virtue? There is not one of them, my lords, but might be trusted with untold gold, as safely as the other. Are they not '*more sober, intelligent, more solid, more steady*,' and withal, more learned, more wise, more every thing, than any youths *we* '*ever had the fortune to see.*' Ah! my lords, they are a *hopeful family.*

"The blessed prospect of succession, which the nation has at this moment before its eyes, is a most undeniable proof of the excellence of our constitution, and of the blessed hereditary system; for nothing, my lords, but a constitution founded on the truest and purest wisdom could admit such heaven-born and heaven-taught characters into the government. Permit me now, my lords, to recall your attention to the libellous chapter I have just read about Kings. I mention this, my lords, because it is my intention to move for a bill to be brought into parliament to expunge that chapter from the Bible, and that the lord chancellor, with the assistance of the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York and the Duke of Clarence, be requested to write a chapter in the room of it; and that Mr. Burke do see that it be truly canonical, and faithfully inserted."—*Finis.*

If the clerk of the court of king's bench should choose to be the author of this luminous encomium on the constitution, I hope he will get it well by heart before he attempts to deliver it, and not have to apologize to parliament, as he did in the case of Bolingbroke's enco-

mium, for forgetting his lesson ; and, with this admonition, I leave him.

Having thus informed the Addressers of what passed at the meeting of parliament, I return to take up the subject at the part where I broke off, in order to introduce the preceding speeches.

I was then stating, that the first policy of the government party was silence, and the next, clamorous contempt ; but as people generally choose to read and judge for themselves, the work still went on, and the affectation of contempt, like the silence that preceded it, passed for nothing.

Thus foiled in their second scheme, their evil genius, like a will-with-a-wisp, led them to a third ; when all at once, as if it had been unfolded to them by a fortune-teller, or Mr. Dundas had discovered it by second sight, this once harmless, insignificant book, without undergoing the alteration of a single letter, became a most wicked and dangerous libel. The whole cabinet, like a ship's crew, became alarmed ; all hands were piped upon deck, as if a conspiracy of elements was forming around them, and out came the proclamation and the prosecution ; and addresses supplied the place of prayers.

Ye silly swains, thought I to myself, why do you torment yourselves thus? The *Rights of Man* is a book calmly and rationally written ; why then are you so disturbed? Did you see how little or how suspicious such conduct makes you appear? Even cunning alone, had you no other faculty, would hush you into prudence. The plans, principles and arguments, contained in that work, are placed before the eyes of the nation and of the world, in a fair, open and manly manner, and nothing more is necessary than to refute them.

Do this, and the whole is done ; but if ye cannot, so neither can ye suppress the reading, nor convict the author ; for that law, in the opinion of all good men,

would convict itself, that should condemn what cannot be refuted.

Having now shown the Addressers the several stages in the business prior to their being called upon, like Cæsar in the Tiber crying to Cassius, "*Help, Cassius, or I sink!*" I next come to remark on the policy of the government in promoting Addresses,—on the consequences naturally resulting therefrom, and on the conduct of the persons concerned.

With respect to the policy, it evidently carries with it every mark and feature of disguised fear. And it will hereafter be placed in the history of extraordinary things, that a pamphlet should be produced by an individual, unconnected with any sect or party, and not seeking to make any, and almost a stranger in the land, that should completely frighten a whole government, and that in the midst of its triumphant security. Such a circumstance cannot fail to prove, that either the pamphlet has irresistible powers, or the government very extraordinary defects, or both. The Nation exhibits no signs of fear at the *Rights of Man;* why then should the Government, unless the interest of the two are really opposite to each other, and the secret is beginning to be known? That there are two distinct classes of men in the nation, those who pay taxes, and those who receive and live upon the taxes, is evident at first sight; and when taxation is carried to excess, it cannot fail to disunite these two, and something of this kind is now beginning to appear.

It is also curious to observe, amidst all the fume and bustle about Proclamations and Addresses, kept up by a few noisy and interested men, how little the mass of the nation seem to care about either. They appear to me, by the indifference they show, not to believe a word the Proclamation contains; and as to the Addresses, they travel to London with the silence of a funeral, and having announced their arrival in the *Gazette*, are deposited

with the ashes of their predecessors, and Mr. Dundas writes their *hic jacent.*

One of the best effects which the Proclamation, and its echo the Addresses, have had, has been that of exciting and spreading curiosity: and it requires only a single reflection to discover, that the object of all curiosity is knowledge. When the mass of the nation saw that placemen, pensioners and borough-mongers were the persons that stood forward to promote Addresses, it could not fail to create suspicions that the public good was not their object; that the character of the books, or writings to which such persons obscurely alluded, not daring to mention them, was directly contrary to what they described them to be, and that it was necessary that every man, for his own satisfaction, should exercise his proper right, and read and judge for himself.

But how will the persons who have been induced to read the *Rights of Man*, by the clamor that has been raised against it, be surprised to find that, instead of a wicked, inflammatory work, instead of a licentious and profligate performance, it abounds with principles of government that are uncontrovertible — with arguments which every reader will feel are unanswerable — with plans for the increase of commerce and manufactures — for the extinction of war — for the education of the children of the poor — for the comfortable support of the aged and decayed persons of both sexes — for the relief of the army and navy, and, in short, for the promotion of every thing that can benefit the moral, civil and potical condition of Man.

Why, then, some calm observer will ask, why is the work prosecuted, if these be the goodly matters it contains? I will tell thee, friend; it contains also a plan for the reduction of taxes, for lessening the immense expenses of government, for abolishing sinecure places and pensions; and it proposes applying the redundant taxes,

that shall be saved by these reforms, to the purposes mentioned in the former paragraph, instead of applying them to the support of idle and profligate placemen and pensioners.

Is it, then, any wonder that placemen and pensioners and the whole train of court expectants, should become the promoters of Addresses, Proclamations and Prosecutions? Or, is it any wonder that corporations and rotten-boroughs which are attacked and exposed, both in the first and second parts of the *Rights of Man*, as unjust monopolies and public nuisances, should join in the cavalcade? Yet these are the sources from which Addresses have sprung. Had not such persons came forward to oppose the *Rights of Man*, I should have doubted the efficacy of my own writings: but those opposers have now proved to me that the blow was well directed, and they have done it justice by confessing the smart.

The principal deception in this business of Addresses has been, that the promoters of them have not come forward in their proper characters. They have assumed to pass themselves upon the public as a part of the public bearing a share of the burden of taxes, and acting for the public good; whereas, they are in general that part of it that adds to the public burden, by living on the produce of the public taxes. They are to the public what the locusts are to the tree: the burden would be less, and the prosperity would be greater, if they were shaken off.

"I do not come here," said Onslow, at the Surry county meeting, "as the lord lieutenant and *custos rotulorum* of the county, but I come here as a plain country gentleman." The fact is, that he came there as what he was, and as no other, and consequently he came as one of the class I have been describing. If it be the character of a gentleman to be fed by the public,

as a pauper is by the parish, Onslow has a fair claim to the title ; and the same description will suit the Duke of Richmond, who led the Address at the Sussex meeting. He also may set up for a gentleman.

As to the meeting in the next adjoining county (Kent), it was a scene of disgrace. About two hundred persons met, when a small part of them drew privately away from the rest and voted an Address ; the consequence of which was that they got together by the ears, and produced a riot in the very act of producing an Address to prevent riots.

That the Proclamation and the Addresses have failed of their intended effect, may be collected from the silence which the government party itself observes. The number of Addresses has been weekly retailed in the *Gazette;* but the number of Addressers has been concealed. Several of the Addresses have been voted by not more than ten or twelve persons ; and a considerable number of them by not more than thirty. The whole number of Addresses presented at the time of writing this letter is three hundred and twenty (rotten-boroughs and corporations included), and even admitting, on an average, one hundred Addressers to each Address, the whole number of Addressers would be but thirty-two thousand, and nearly three months have been taken up in procuring this number. That the success of the Proclamation has been less than the success of the work it was intended to discourage, is a matter within my own knowledge ; for a greater number of the cheap edition of the first and second parts of the *Rights of Man* has been sold in the space of one month, than the whole number of Addressers (admitting them to be thirty-two thousand) have amounted to in three months.

It is a dangerous attempt in any government to say to a nation, "*Thou shalt not read.*" This is now done in Spain, and was formerly done under the old government

of France ; but it served to procure the downfall of the latter, and is subverting that of the former ; and it will have the same tendency in all countries ; because *thought* by some means or other, is got abroad in the world, and cannot be restrained, though reading may.

If the *Rights of Man* were a book that deserved the vile description which the promoters of the Addresses have given of it, why did not these men prove their charge, and satisfy the people, by producing it, and reading it publicly? This most certainly ought to have been done, and would also have been done, had they believed it would have answered their purpose. But the fact is, that the book contains truths, which those time-servers dreaded to hear, and dreaded that the people should know ; and it is now following up the Addresses in every part of the nation, and convicting them of falsehoods.

Among the unwarrantable proceedings to which the Proclamation has given rise, the meetings of the justices in several of the towns and counties ought to be noticed. Those men have assumed to re-act the farce of general warrants, and to suppress by their own authority whatever publications they please. This is an attempt at power, equalled only by the conduct of the minor despots of the most despotic governments in Europe, and yet those justices affect to call England a free country. But even this, perhaps, like the scheme for garrisoning the country, by building military barracks, is necessary to awaken the country to a sense of its rights, and, as such, it will have a good effect.

Another part of the conduct of such justices has been, that of threatening to take away the licenses from taverns and public-houses, where the inhabitants of the neighborhood associated to read and discuss the principles of government, and to inform each other thereon. This, again, is similar to what is doing in Spain and

Russia; and the reflection which it cannot fail to suggest is, that the principles and conduct of any government must be bad, when that government dreads and startles at discussion, and seeks security by a prevention of knowledge.

If the government, or the constitution, or by whatever name it be called, be that miracle of perfection which the Proclamation and the Addresses have trumpeted it forth to be, it ought to have defied discussion and investigation, instead of dreading it. Whereas, every attempt it makes, either by proclamation, persecution, or address, to suppress investigation, is a confession that it feels itself unable to bear it. It is error only, and not truth, that shrinks from inquiry. All the numerous pamphlets, and all the newspaper falsehood and abuse that have been published against the *Rights of Man*, have fallen before it like pointless arrows; and, in like manner, would any work have fallen before the constitution, had the constitution, as it is called, been founded on as good political principles as those on which the *Rights of Man* is written.

It is a good constitution for courtiers, placemen, pensioners, borough-holders and the leaders of parties, and these are the men that have been the active leaders of addresses; but it is a bad constitution for at least ninety-nine parts of the nation out of an hundred, and this truth is every day making its way.

It is bad, first, because it entails upon the nation the unnecessary expense of supporting three forms and systems of government at once, namely, the monarchical, the aristocratical and the democratical.

Secondly, because it is impossible to unite such a discordant composition by any other means than perpetual corruption; and therefore the corruption so loudly and so universally complained of, is no other than the natural consequence of such an unnatural compound of

governments ; and in this consists that excellence which the numerous herd of placemen and pensioners so loudly extol, and which at the same time occasions that enormous load of taxes under which the rest of the nation groans.

Among the mass of national delusions calculated to amuse and impose upon the multitude, the standing one has been that of flattering them into taxes, by calling the government (or as they please to express it, the English constitution) "*the envy and admiration of the world.*" Scarcely an address has been voted in which some of the speakers have not uttered this hackneyed nonsensical falsehood.

Two Revolutions have taken place, those of America and France ; and both of them have rejected the unnatural compounded system of the English Government. America has declared against all hereditary Government, and established the representative system of Government only. France has entirely rejected the aristocratical part, and is now discovering the absurdity of the monarchical, and is approaching fast to the representative system. On what ground, then, do those men continue a declaration, respecting what they call the *envy and admiration of other nations*, which the voluntary practice of such nations, as have had the opportunity of establishing Governments, contradicts and falsifies? Will such men never confine themselves to truth?—Will they be forever the deceivers of the people?

But I will go farther, and show, that, were Government now to begin in England, the people could not be brought to establish the same system they now submit to.

In speaking upon this subject (or any other) *on the pure ground of principle*, antiquity and precedent cease to be authority, and hoary-headed error loses its effect. The reasonableness and propriety of things must be examined abstractedly from custom and usage ; and

in this point of view, the right which grows into practice to-day is as much a right, and as old in principle and theory as if it had the customary sanction of a thousand ages. Principles have no connection with time, nor characters with names.

To say that the Government of this country is composed of King, Lords and Commons, is the mere phraseology of custom. It is composed of men ; and whoever the men be to whom the Government of any country is entrusted, they ought to be the best and wisest that can be found, and if they are not so, they are not fit for the station. A man derives no more excellence from the change of a name, or calling him King, or calling him Lord, than I should do by changing my name from Thomas to George, or from Paine to Guelph. I should not be a whit the more able to write a book, because my name were altered ; neither would any man, now called a King or a Lord, have a whit the more sense than he now has, were he to call himself Thomas Paine.

As to the word "Commons," applied as it is in England, it is a term of degradation and reproach, and ought to be abolished. It is a term unknown in free countries.

But to the point. Let us suppose that Government was now to begin in England, and that the plan of Government, offered to the nation for its approbation or rejection, consisted of the following parts :

First.—That some one individual should be taken from all the rest of the nation, and to whom all the rest should swear obedience, and never be permitted to sit down in his presence, and that they should give to him one million sterling a year.—That the nation should never after have power or authority to make laws but with his express consent, and that his sons and his sons' sons, whether wise or foolish, good men or bad, fit or unfit, should have the same power, and also the same money annually paid to them forever.

Second.—That there should be two houses of Legislature to assist in making laws, one of which should, in the first instance, be entirely appointed by the aforesaid person, and that their sons and their sons' sons, whether wise or foolish, good men or bad, fit or unfit, should forever after be hereditary Legislators.

Third. — That the other house should be chosen in the same manner as the house, now called the House of Commons, is chosen, and should be subject to the control of the two aforesaid hereditary Powers in all things.

It would be impossible to cram such a farago of imposition and absurdity down the throat of this or any other nation, that was capable of reasoning upon its rights and interests.

They would ask, in the first place, on what ground of right, or on what principle, such irrational and preposterous distinctions could, or ought to be made; and what pretensions any man could have, or what services he could render, to entitle him to a million a year. They would go farther, and revolt at the idea of consigning their children, and their children's children, to the dominion of persons hereafter to be born, and who might, for any thing they could foresee, turn out to be knaves or fools; and they would finally discover that the project of hereditary Governors and Legislators *was a treasonable usurpation over the rights of posterity.*

Not only the calm dictates of reason and the force of natural affection, but the integrity of manly pride, would impel men to spurn such proposals.

From the grosser absurdities of such a scheme, they would extend their examination to the practical defects. —They would soon see that it would end in tyranny accomplished by fraud. That in the operation of it, it would be two to one against them, because the two parts that were to be made hereditary, would form a common interest, and stick to each other; and that themselves

and their representatives would become no better than hewers of wood and drawers of water for the other parts of the Government.— Yet call one of those powers King, the other, Lords, and the third, the Commons, and it gives the model of what is called the English Government.

I have asserted, and have shown, both in the First and Second Parts of *Rights of Man*, that there is no such thing as an English Constitution, and that the people have yet a Constitution to form. *A Constitution is a thing antecedent to a Government; it is the act of the people creating a Government and giving it powers, and defining the limits and exercise of the powers so given.* But whenever did the people of England, acting in their original constituent character, by a delegation elected for that express purpose, declare and say: "*We, the people of this land, do constitute and appoint this to be our system and form of Government?*" The Government has assumed to constitute itself, but it never was constituted by the people, in whom alone the right of constituting resides.

I will here recite the preamble to the Federal Constitution of the United States of America. I have shown in the Second Part of *Rights of Man* the manner by which the Constitution was formed and afterwards ratified, and to which I refer the reader. The preamble is in the following words:

"WE, THE PEOPLE of the United States, in order "to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure "domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, "promote the general welfare, secure the blessings of "liberty to ourselves, and our posterity, DO ORDAIN AND "ESTABLISH this CONSTITUTION for the United States "of America."

Then follow the several articles which appoint the manner in which the several component parts of the

Government, legislative and executive, shall be elected, and the period of their duration, and the powers they shall have : also, the manner by which future additions, alterations or amendments, shall be made to the Constitution. Consequently, every improvement that can be made in the science of Government, follows in that country as a matter of order. It is only in Governments founded on assumption and false principles, that reasoning upon, and investigating systems and principles of Government, and showing their several excellencies and defects, are termed libelous and seditious. These terms were made part of the charge brought against Locke, Hampden and Sydney, and will continue to be brought against all good men, so long as bad government shall continue.

The Government of this country has been ostentatiously giving challenges for more than an hundred years past, upon what it called its own excellence and perfection. Scarcely a King's Speech or a Parliamentary Speech has been uttered in which this glove has not been thrown, till the world has been insulted with their challenges. But it now appears that all this was vapor and vain-boasting, or that it was intended to conceal abuses and defects, and hush the people into taxes. I have taken the challenge up, and in behalf of the public have shown, in a fair, open and candid manner, both the radical and practical defects of the system ; when, lo ! those champions of the Civil List have fled away, and sent the Attorney-General to deny the challenge, by turning the acceptance of it into an attack, and defending their places and pensions by a prosecution.

I will here drop this part of the subject, and state a few particulars respecting the prosecution now pending, by which the Addressers will see that they have been used as tools to the prosecuting party and their dependents. The case is as follows :

The original edition of the First and Second Parts of *Rights of Man*, having been expensively printed (in the modern style of printing pamphlets, that they might be bound up with Mr. Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*), the high price precluded the generality of people from purchasing; and many applications were made to me from various parts of the country to print the work in a cheaper manner. The people of Sheffield requested leave to print two thousand copies for themselves, with which request I immediately complied. The same request came to me from Rotherham, from Leicester, from Chester, from several towns in Scotland; and from James Mackintosh, author of *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, brought me a request from Warwickshire, for leave to print ten thousand copies in that county. I had already sent a cheap edition to Scotland; and finding the applications increase, I concluded that the best method of complying therewith, would be to print a very numerous edition in London, under my own direction, by which means the work would be more perfect, and the price be reduced lower than it could be by *printing* small editions in the country of only a few thousands each.

The cheap edition of the First Part was begun about the middle of last April, and from that moment, and not before, I expected a prosecution, and the event has proved that I was not mistaken. I had then occasion to write to Mr. Thomas Walker, of Manchester, and after informing him of my intention of giving up the work for the purpose of general information, I informed him of what I apprehended would be the consequence; that while the work was at a price that precluded an extensive circulation, the Government party, not able to controvert the plans, arguments and principles it contained, had chosen to remain silent; but that I expected they would make an attempt to deprive the mass of the

nation, and especially the poor, of the right of reading, by the pretence of prosecuting either the Author or the Publisher, or both. They chose to begin with the Publisher.

Nearly a month, however, passed, before I had any information given me of their intentions. I was then at Bromley, in Kent, upon which I came immediately to town (May 14), and went to Mr. Jordan, the publisher of the original edition. He had that evening been served with a summons, to appear at the Court of King's Bench on the Monday following, but for what purpose was not stated. Supposing it to be on account of the work, I appointed a meeting with him on the next morning, which was accordingly had, when I provided an attorney, and took the expense of the defence on myself. But finding afterwards that he absented himself from the attorney employed, and had engaged another, and that he had been closeted with the Solicitors of the Treasury, I left him to follow his own choice, and he chose to plead Guilty. This he might do if he pleased ; and I make no objection against him for it. I believe that his idea by the word *Guilty*, was no other than declaring himself to be the publisher, without any regard to the merits or demerits of the work ; for were it to be construed otherwise, it would amount to the absurdity of converting a publisher into a Jury, and his confession into a verdict upon the work itself. This would be the highest possible refinement upon packing of Juries.

On the 21st of May, they commenced their prosecution against me, as the Author, by leaving a summons at my lodgings in town, to appear at the Court of King's Bench on the 8th of June following ; and on the same day (May 21), *they issued also their Proclamation.* Thus the Court of St. James and the Court of King's Bench were playing into each other's hands at the same in-

stant of time, and the farce of Addresses brought up the rear ; and this mode of proceeding is called by the prostituted name of Law. Such a thundering rapidity, after a ministerial dormancy of almost a year and an half, can be attributed to no other cause than their having gained information of the forwardness of the cheap edition, and the dread they felt at the progressive increase of political knowledge.

I was strongly advised by several gentlemen, as well as those in the practice of the law, as others, to prefer a bill of indictment against the publisher of the Proclamation, as a publication tending to influence, or rather to dictate the verdict of a jury on the issue of a matter then pending ; but it appeared to me much better to avail myself of the opportunity which such a precedent justified me in using, by meeting the Proclamation and the Addressers on their own ground, and publicly defending the work which had been thus unwarrantably attacked and traduced. And, conscious as I now am that the work entitled *Rights of Man*, so far from being, as has been maliciously or erroneously represented, a false, wicked and seditious libel, is a work abounding with unanswerable truths, with principles of the purest morality and benevolence, and with arguments not to be controverted, — conscious, I say, of these things, and having no object in view but the happiness of mankind, I have now put the matter to the best proof in my power, by giving to the public a cheap edition of the first and second parts of that work. Let every man read and judge for himself, not only of the merits and demerits of the work, but of the matters therein contained, which relate to his own interest and happiness.

If, to expose the fraud and imposition of monarchy, and every species of hereditary government — to lessen the oppression of taxes — to propose plans for the education of helpless infancy, and the comfortable support of

the aged and distressed — to endeavor to conciliate nations to each other — to extirpate the horrid practice of war — to promote universal peace, civilization and commerce — and to break the chains of political superstition, and raise degraded man to his proper rank ; — if these things be libellous, let me live the life of a libeller, and let the name of *libeller* be engraved on my tomb.

Of all the weak and ill-judged measures which fear, ignorance or arrogance could suggest, the Proclamation and the project for Addresses are the two worst. They served to advertise the work which the promoters of those measures wished to keep unknown ; and in doing this they offered violence to the judgment of the people, by calling on them to condemn what they forbade them to know ; and put the strength of their party to that hazardous issue that prudence would have avoided. The county meeting for Middlesex was attended by only one hundred and eighteen Addressers. They, no doubt, expected that thousands would flock to their standard, and clamor against the *Rights of Man.* But the case most probably is, that men in all countries are not so blind to their rights and their interests as Governments believe.

Having thus shown the extraordinary manner in which the Government party commenced their attack, I proceed to offer a few observations on the prosecution, and on the mode of trial by special jury.

In the first place, I have written a book ; and if it cannot be refuted, it cannot be condemned. But I do not consider the prosecution as particularly levelled against me, but against the general right, or the right of every man, of investigating systems and principles of Government, and showing their several excellencies or defects. If the press be free only to flatter Government, as Mr. Burke has done, and to cry up and extol what certain court sycophants are pleased to call a "glorious consti-

tution," and not free to examine into its errors or abuses, or whether a constitution really exists or not, such freedom is no other than that of Spain, Turkey or Russia; and a jury in this case would not be a jury to try, but an inquisition to condemn.

I have asserted, and by fair and open argument maintained, the right of every nation at all times to establish such a system and form of government for itself as best accords with its disposition, interest and happiness; and to change and alter it as it sees occasion. Will any jury deny to the nation this right? If they do, they are traitors, and their verdict would be null and void. And if they admit the right, the means must be admitted also; for it would be the highest absurdity to say, that the right existed, but the means did not. The question then is, What are the means by which the possession and exercise of this national right are to be secured? The answer will be, that of maintaining, inviolably, the right of free investigation; for investigation always serves to detect error, and to bring forth truth.

I have, as an individual, given my opinion upon what I believe to be not only the best, but the true system of Government, which is the representative system, and I have given reasons for that opinion.

First. Because in the representative system, no office of very extraordinary power, or extravagant pay, is attached to any individual; and consequently, there is nothing to excite those national contentions and civil wars, with which countries under monarchical Governments are frequently convulsed, and of which the history of England exhibits such numerous instances.

Second. Because the representative is a system of Government always in maturity; whereas monarchical Government fluctuates through all the stages, from nonage to dotage.

Third. Because the representative system admits of

none but men properly qualified, into the Government, or removes them if they prove to be otherwise. Whereas, in the hereditary system, a nation may be encumbered with a knave or an idiot for a whole life-time, and not be benefited by a successor.

Fourth. Because there does not exist a right to establish hereditary Government; or, in other words, hereditary successors; because hereditary Government always means a Government yet to come, and the case always is, that those who are to live afterwards have the same right to establish Government for themselves as the people had who lived before them; and, therefore, all laws attempting to establish hereditary Government are founded on assumption and political fiction.

If these positions be truths, and I challenge any man to prove the contrary; if they tend to instruct and enlighten mankind, and to free them from error, oppression and political superstition, which are the objects I have in view in publishing them, that jury would commit an act of injustice to their country, and to me, if not an act of perjury, that should call them *false*, *wicked* and *malicious*.

Dragonetti, in his treatise, *On Virtues and Rewards*, has a paragraph worthy of being recorded in every country in the world.—"The science," says he, "of the politician consists in fixing the true point of happiness and freedom. Those men would deserve the gratitude of ages, who should discover a mode of Government that contained the greatest sum of *individual happiness* with the least *national expense*." But if juries are to be made use of to prohibit inquiry, to suppress truth, and to stop the progress of knowledge, this boasted palladium of liberty becomes the most successful instrument of tyranny.

Among the arts practiced at the bar, and from the bench, to impose upon the understanding of a jury, and

obtain a verdict where the consciences of men could not otherwise consent, one of the most successful has been that of calling truth a libel, and of insinuating that the words "falsely, wickedly and maliciously," though they are made the formidable and high sounding part of the charge, are not matters for consideration with a jury. For what purpose, then, are they retained, unless it be for that of imposition and willful defamation?

I cannot conceive a greater violation of order, nor a more abominable insult upon morality and upon human understanding, than to see a man sitting in the judgment seat, affecting by an antiquated foppery of dress to impress the audience with awe; then causing witnesses and jury to be sworn to truth and justice, himself having officially sworn the same; then causing to be read a prosecution against a man charging him with having *wickedly and maliciously written and published a certain false, wicked and seditious book;* and having gone through all this with a show of solemnity, as if he saw the eye of the Almighty darting through the roof of the building like a ray of light, turn, in an instant, the whole into a farce, and, in order to obtain a verdict that could not otherwise be obtained, tell the jury that the charge of *falsely, wickedly and seditiously* meant nothing; that *truth* was out of the question; and that whether the person accused spoke truth or falsehood, or intended *virtuously or wickedly*, was the same thing; and finally conclude the wretched inquisitorial scene, by stating some antiquated precedent, equally as abominable as that which is then acting; or giving some opinion of his own, and *falsely calling the one and the other—law.* It was, most probably, to such a judge as this, that the most solemn of all reproofs was given—"*The Lord will smite thee, thou whitened wall.*"

I now proceed to offer some remarks on what is called a special jury. As to what is called a special verdict, I

shall make no other remark upon it, than that it is in reality *not* a verdict. It is an attempt on the part of the jury to delegate, or of the bench to obtain, the exercise of that right which is committed to the jury only.

With respect to the special juries, I shall state such matters as I have been able to collect, for I do not find any uniform opinion concerning the mode of appointing them.

In the first place, the mode of trial is but of modern invention and the origin of it, as I am told, is as follows:

Formerly, when disputes arose between merchants, and were brought before a court, the case was that the nature of their commerce, and the method of keeping merchants' accounts not being sufficiently understood by persons out of their own line, it became necessary to depart from the common mode of appointing juries, and to select such persons for a jury whose *practical knowledge* would enable them justly to decide upon the case. From this introduction, special juries became more general, but some doubts having arisen as to their legality, an act was passed in the 3d of George II. to establish them as legal, and also to extend them to all cases, not only between individuals, but in cases where *the Government itself should be the prosecutor.* This most probably gave rise to the suspicion so generally entertained of packing a jury; because, by this act, when the crown, as it is called, is the prosecutor, the master of the crown-office, who holds his office under the crown, is the person who either wholly nominates, or has great power in nominating the jury, and therefore it has greatly the appearance of the prosecuting party selecting a jury.

The process is as follows:

On motion being made in court, by either the plaintiff or defendant for a special jury, the court grants it or not, at its own discretion.

If it be granted, the solicitor of the party that applied for the special jury, gives notice to the solicitor of the adverse party, and a day and hour are appointed for them to meet at the office of the master of the crown-office. The master of the crown-office sends to the sheriff or his deputy, who attends with the sheriff's book of freeholders. From this book, forty-eight names are taken, and a copy thereof given to each of the parties; and, on a future day, notice is again given, and the solicitors meet a second time, and each strikes out twelve names. The list being thus reduced from forty-eight to twenty-four, the first twelve that appear in court and answer to their names, is the special jury for that cause. The first operation, that of taking the forty-eight names, is called nominating the jury, and the reducing them to twenty-four is called striking the jury.

Having thus stated the general process, I come to particulars; and the first question will be, How are the forty-eight names, out of which the jury is to be struck, obtained from the sheriff's book? For herein lies the principal ground of suspicion, with respect to what is understood by packing of juries.

Either they must be taken by some rule agreed upon between the parties, or by some common rule known and established beforehand, or at the discretion of some person, who, in such a case, ought to be perfectly disinterested in the issue, as well officially as otherwise.

In the case of merchants, and in all cases between individuals, the master of the office, called the crown-office, is officially an indifferent person, and as such may be a proper person to act between the parties, and present them with a list of forty-eight names, out of which each party is to strike twelve. But the case assumes an entirely different character, when the Government itself is the prosecutor. The master of the crown-office is then an officer holding his office under the prosecutor; and it

is therefore no wonder that the suspicion of packing juries should, in such cases, have been so prevalent.

This will apply with additional force, when the prosecution is commenced against the author or publisher of such works as treat of reforms, and of the abolition of superfluous places and offices, &c., because in such cases every person holding an office, subject to that suspicion, becomes interested as a party; and the office, called the crown-office, may, upon examination, be found to be of this description.

I have heard it asserted, that the master of the crown-office is to open the sheriff's book as it were per hazard, and take thereout forty-eight *following* names, to which the word merchant or esquire is affixed. The former of these are certainly proper, when the case is between merchants, and has reference to the origin of the custom, and to nothing else. As to the word esquire, every man is an esquire who pleases to call himself esquire; and the sensible part of mankind are leaving it off. But the matter for inquiry is, whether there be any existing law to direct the mode by which the forty-eight names shall be taken, or whether the mode be merely that of custom which the office has created; or whether the selection of the forty-eight names be wholly at the discretion and choice of the master of the crown-office? One or other of the two latter appears to be the case, because the act already mentioned, of the 3d of George II., lays down no rule or mode, nor refers to any preceding law — but says only, that special juries shall hereafter be struck, "*in such manner as special juries have been and are usually struck.*"

This act appears to have been what is generally understood by a "*deep take in.*" It was fitted to the spur of the moment in which it was passed, 3d of George II., when parties ran high, and it served to throw into the hands of Walpole, who was then minister, the manage-

ment of juries in crown prosecutions, by making the nomination of the forty-eight persons from whom the jury was to be struck, follow the precedent established by custom between individuals, and by this means it slipped into practice with less suspicion. Now, the manner of obtaining special juries through the medium of an officer of the Government, such, for instance, as a master of the crown-office, may be impartial in the case of merchants, or other individuals, but it becomes highly improper and suspicious in cases where the Government itself is one of the parties. And it must, upon the whole, appear a strange inconsistency, that a Government should keep one officer to commence prosecutions, and another officer to nominate the forty-eight persons from whom the jury is to be struck, both of whom are *officers of the civil list*, and yet continue to call this by the pompous name of *the glorious right of trial by jury!*

In the case of the King against Jordan, for publishing the *Rights of Man*, the Attorney-General moved for the appointment of a special jury, and the master of the crown-office nominated the forty-eight persons himself, and took them from such part of the sheriff's book as he pleased.

The trial did not come on, occasioned by Jordan withdrawing his plea; but if it had, it might have afforded an opportunity of discussing the subject of special juries; for though such discussion might have had no effect in the Court of King's Bench, it would, in the present disposition for inquiry, have had a considerable effect upon the country; and, in all national reforms, this is the proper point to begin at. Put a country right, and it will soon put Government right. Among the improper things acted by the Government in the case of special juries, on their own motion, one has been that of treating the jury with a dinner, and afterwards giving each

juryman two guineas, if a verdict be found for the prosecution, and only one if otherwise; and it has been long observed that, in London and Westminster, there are persons who appear to make a trade of serving, by being so frequently seen upon special juries.

Thus much for special juries. As to what is called a *common jury*, upon any Government prosecution against the author or publisher of the *Rights of Man*, during the time of the *present sheriffry*, I have one question to offer, which is, *whether the present sheriffs of London, having publicly prejudged the case, by the part they have taken in procuring an Address from the County of Middlesex (however diminutive and insignificant the number of Addressers were, being only one hundred and eighteen), are eligible or proper persons to be entrusted with the power of returning a jury to try the issue of any such prosecution.*

But the whole matter appears, at least to me, to be worthy of a more extensive consideration than what relates to any jury, whether special or common; for the case is, whether any part of a whole nation, locally selected as a jury of twelve men always is, be competent to judge and determine for the whole nation, on any matter that relates to systems and principles of Government, and whether it be not applying the institution of juries to purposes for which such institutions were not intended? For example, I have asserted, in the work *Rights of Man*, that as every man in the nation pays taxes, so has every man a right to a share in Government, and consequently, that the people of Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Halifax, &c., have the same right as those of London. Shall, then, twelve men, picked out between Temple Bar and Whitechapel, because the book happened to be first published there, decide upon the rights of the inhabitants of those towns, or of any other town or village in the nation?

Having thus spoken of juries, I come next to offer a few observations on the matter contained in the information or prosecution.

The work *Rights of Man* consists of part the first, and part the second. The first part the prosecutor has thought it most proper to let alone; and from the second part he has selected a few short paragraphs, making in the whole not quite two pages of the same printing as in the cheap edition. Those paragraphs relate chiefly to certain facts, such as the revolution of 1688, and the coming of George I., commonly called the House of Hanover, or the House of Brunswick, or some such house. The arguments, plans and principles contained in the work, the prosecutor has not ventured to attack. They are beyond his reach.

The Act which the prosecutor appears to rest most upon for the support of the prosecution, is the Act, entitled "An Act, declaring the rights and liberties of the subject, and settling the succession of the crown," passed in the first year of William and Mary, and more commonly known by the name of the "Bill of Rights."

I have called this bill "*A bill of wrongs and of insult.*" My reasons, and also my proofs, are as follows:

The method and principle which this bill takes for declaring rights and liberties are in direct contradiction to rights and liberties; it is an assumed attempt to take them wholly from posterity—for the declaration in the said bill is as follows:

"The lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, do, in *the name of all the people*, most humbly and faithfully *submit themselves, their heirs and posterity forever;*" that is, to William and Mary his wife, their heirs and successors. This is a strange way of declaring rights and liberties. But the Parliament who made this declaration in the name, and on the part of the people, had no authority for them for so doing; and with respect to

posterity forever, they had no right or authority whatever in the case. It was assumption and usurpation. I have reasoned very extensively against the principle of this bill in the first part of the *Rights of Man*; the prosecutor has silently admitted that reasoning, and he now commences a prosecution on the authority of the bill, after admitting the reasoning against it.

It is also to be observed, that the declaration in this bill, abject and irrational as it is, had no other intentional operation than against the family of the Stuarts, and their abettors. The idea did not then exist, that in the space of an hundred years, posterity might discover a different and much better system of government, and that every species of hereditary Government might fall, as popes and monks had fallen before. This, I say, was not then thought of, and therefore the application of the bill, in the present case, is a new, erroneous and illegal application, and is the same as creating a new bill *ex post facto.*

It has ever been the craft of courtiers, for the purpose of keeping up an expensive and enormous civil list, and a mummery of useless and antiquated places and offices at the public expense, to be continually hanging England upon some individual or other, called *king*, though the man might not have capacity to be a parish constable. The folly and absurdity of this is appearing more and more every day; and still those men continue to act as if no alteration in the public opinion had taken place. They hear each other's nonsense, and suppose the whole nation talks the same gibberish.

Let such men cry up the House of Orange, or the House of Brunswick, if they please. They would cry up any other house if it suited their purpose, and give as good reasons for it. But what is this house, or that house, or any other house to a nation? "*For a nation to be free, it is sufficient that she wills it.*" Her free-

dom depends wholly upon herself, and not on any house, nor on any individual. I ask not in what light this cargo of foreign houses appears to others, but I will say in what light it appears to me. It was like the trees of the forest, saying unto the bramble, "Come thou and reign over us."

Thus much for both their houses. I now come to speak of two other houses, which are also put into the information, and these are the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Here, I suppose, the attorney-general intends to prove me guilty of speaking either truth or falsehood; for, according to the modern interpretation of libels, it does not signify which, and the only improvement necessary to show the complete absurdity of such doctrine would be, to prosecute a man for uttering a most *false and wicked truth.*

I will quote the part I am going to give, from the office copy, with the attorney-general's innendoes enclosed in parentheses, as they stand in the information, and I hope that the civil list officer will caution the court not to laugh when he reads them, and also to take care not to laugh himself.

The information states, That *Thomas Paine, being a wicked, malicious, seditious and evil disposed person, hath, with force and arms, and most wicked cunning, written and published a certain false, scandalous, malicious and seditious libel; in one part thereof, to the tenor and effect following, that is to say:*

"With respect to the two houses, of which the English Parliament (*meaning the Parliament of this kingdom*) is composed, they appear to be effectually influenced into one, and, as a legislature, to have no temper of its own. The minister (*meaning the minister employed by the King of this realm, in the administration of the Government thereof*), whoever he at any time may be, touches *it* (*meaning the two houses of Parliament of this king-*

dom) as with an opium wand, and *it* (*meaning the two Houses of Parliament of this kingdom*) sleeps obedience. As I am not malicious enough to disturb their repose, though it be time they should awake, I leave the two houses and the attorney-general to the enjoyment of their dreams, and proceed to a new subject."

The gentlemen to whom I shall next address myself are those who have styled themselves "*friends of the people*," holding their meeting at the Freemason's Tavern, London.

One of the principal members of this society is Mr. Grey, who, I believe, is also one of the most independent members in Parliament. I collect this opinion from what Mr. Burke formerly mentioned to me, rather than from any knowledge of my own. The occasion was as follows:

I was in England at the time the bubble broke forth about Nootka Sound: and the day after the King's message, as it is called, was sent to Parliament; I wrote a note to Mr. Burke, that upon the condition the French Revolution should not be a subject (for he was then writing the book I have since answered) I would call on him the next day, and mention some matters I was acquainted with, respecting that affair; for it appeared to me extraordinary that any body of men, calling themselves representatives, should commit themselves so precipitately, or, "sleep obedience," as Parliament was then doing, and run a nation into expense, and perhaps a war, without so much as inquiring into the case or the subject, of both which I had some knowledge.

When I saw Mr. Burke, and mentioned the circumstances to him, he particularly spoke of Mr. Grey, as the fittest member to bring such matters forward; for, said Mr. Burke, "*I am not the proper* person to do it, as I am in a treaty with Mr. Pitt about Mr. Hastings' trial." I hope the attorney-general will allow, that Mr. Burke

was then *sleeping his obedience*. But to return to the society.—

I cannot bring myself to believe, that the general motive of this society is any thing more than that by which every former Parliamentary opposition has been governed, and by which the present is sufficiently known. Failing in their pursuit of power and place within doors, they have now (and that in not a very mannerly manner) endeavored to possess themselves of that ground out of doors, which, had it not been made by others, would not have been made by them. They appear to me to have watched, with more cunning than candor, the progress of a certain publication, and when they saw it had excited a spirit of inquiry, and was rapidly spreading, they stepped forward to profit by the opportunity, and Mr. Fox *then* called it a libel. In saying this, he libelled himself. Politicians of this cast, such, I mean, as those who trim between parties, and lie by for events, are to be found in every country, and it never yet happened that they did not do more harm than good. They embarrass business, fritter it to nothing, perplex the people, and the event to themselves generally is, that they go just far enough to make enemies of the few, without going far enough to make friends of the many.

Whoever will read the declaration of this society, of the 25th of April and 5th of May, will find a studied reserve upon all the points that are real abuses. They speak not once of the extravagance of Government, of the abominable list of unnecessary and sinecure places and pensions, of the enormity of the civil list, of the excess of taxes, nor of any one matter that substantially affects the nation ; and from some conversation that has passed in that society, it does not appear to me that it is any part of their plan to carry this class of reforms into practice. No opposition party ever did, when it gained possession.

In making these free observations, I mean not to enter into contention with this society ; their incivility towards me is what I should expect from place-hunting reformers. They are welcome, however, to the ground they have advanced upon, and I wish that every individual among them may act in the same upright, uninfluenced and public spirited manner that I have done. Whatever reforms may be obtained, and by whatever means, they will be for the benefit of others and not for me. I have no other interest in the cause than the interest of my heart. The part I have acted has been wholly that of a volunteer, unconnected with party ; and when I quit, it shall be as honorably as I began.

I consider the reform of Parliament, by an application to Parliament, as proposed by the society, to be a worn out hacknied subject, about which the nation is tired, and the parties are deceiving each other. It is not a subject that is cognizable before Parliament, because no Government has a right to alter itself, either in whole or in part. The right, and the exercise of that right, appertains to the nation only, and the proper means is by a national convention, elected for the purpose, by all the people. By this, the will of the nation whether to reform or not, or what the reform shall be, or how far it shall extend, will be known, and it cannot be known by any other means. Partial addresses, or separate associations, are not testimonies of the general will.

It is, however, certain, that the opinions of men, with respect to systems and principles of Government, are changing fast in all countries. The alteration in England within the space of a little more than a year, is far greater than could have been believed, and it is daily and hourly increasing. It moves along the country with the silence of thought. The enormous expense of Government has provoked men to think, by making them feel ; and the Proclamation has served to increase

jealousy and disgust. To prevent, therefore, those commotions which too often and too suddenly arise from suffocated discontents, it is best that the general WILL should have the full and free opportunity of being publicly ascertained and known.

Wretched as the state of representation is in England, it is every day becoming worse, because the unrepresented parts of the nation are increasing in population and property, and the represented parts are decreasing. It is, therefore, no ill-grounded estimate to say, that as not one person in seven is represented, at least fourteen millions in taxes, out of the seventeen millions, are paid by the unrepresented part; for although copyholds and leaseholds are assessed to the land tax, the holders are unrepresented. Should then a general demur take place as to the obligation of paying taxes, on the ground of not being represented, it is not the representatives of rotten-boroughs, nor special juries, that can decide the question. This is one of the possible cases that ought to be foreseen, in order to prevent the inconveniences that might arise to numerous individuals, by provoking it.

I confess I had no idea of petitioning for rights. Whatever the rights of people are, they have a right to them, and nobody has a right either to withhold them or to grant them. Government ought to be established on such principles of justice as to exclude the occasion of all such applications; for, wherever they appear, they are virtually accusations.

I wish that Mr. Grey, since he has embarked in the business, would take the whole of it into consideration. He will then see, that the right of reforming the state of the representation does not reside in Parliament, and that the only motion he could consistently make would be, that Parliament should *recommend* the election of a convention of the people, because all pay taxes. But

whether Parliament recommend it or not, the right of the nation would neither be lessened nor increased thereby.

As to petitions from the unrepresented part, they ought not to be looked for. As well might it be expected that Manchester, Sheffield, &c., should petition the rotten-boroughs, as that they should petition the representatives of those boroughs. Those two towns alone pay far more taxes than all the rotten-boroughs put together, and it is scarcely to be expected they should pay their court either to the boroughs or the borough-mongers.

It ought also to be observed, that what is called Parliament, is composed of two houses that have always declared against the right of each other to interfere in any matter that related to the circumstances of either, particularly that of election. A reform, therefore, in the representation cannot, on the ground they have individually taken, become the subject of an act of Parliament, because such a mode would include the interference against which the Commons, on their part, have protested ; but must, as well on the ground of formality as on that of right, proceed from a national convention.

Let Mr. Grey, or any other man, sit down and endeavor to put his thoughts together for the purpose of drawing up an application to Parliament for a reform of Parliament, and he will soon convince himself of the folly of the attempt. He will find that he cannot get on—that he cannot make his thoughts join, so as to produce any effect ; for, whatever formality of words he may use, they will unavoidably include two ideas directly opposed to such other ; the one in setting forth the reasons, the other in praying for relief, and the two, when placed together, would stand thus : "*The representation in Parliament is so very corrupt, that we can no longer confide in it,—and, therefore, confiding in the justice and wisdom of Parliament, we pray,*" *&c.*

The heavy manner in which every former proposed application to Parliament has dragged, sufficiently shows that, though the nation might not exactly see the awkwardness of the measure, it could not clearly see its way by those means. To this also may be added another remark, which is, that the worse Parliament is, the less will be the inclination to petition it. This indifference, viewed as it ought to be, is one of the strongest censures the public can express. It is as if they were to say to them, "Ye are not worth reforming."

Let any man examine the court-calendar of placemen in both houses, and the manner in which the civil list operates, and he will be at no loss to account for this indifference and want of confidence on one side, nor of the opposition to reforms on the other.

Besides the numerous list of paid persons exhibited in the court-calendar, which so indecently stares the nation in the face, there is an unknown number of masked pensioners, which renders parliament still more suspected.

Who would have supposed that Mr. Burke, holding forth as he formerly did against secret influence and corrupt majorities, should become a concealed pensioner? I will now state the case, not for the little purpose of exposing Mr. Burke, but to show the inconsistency of any application to a body of men, more than half of whom, as far as the nation can at present know, may be in the same case with himself.

Towards the end of Lord North's administration, Mr. Burke brought a bill into Parliament, generally known as Mr. Burke's Reform Bill; in which, among other things, it is enacted, "That no pension exceeding the sum of three hundred pounds a year shall be granted to any one person, and that the whole amount of the pensions granted in one year shall not exceed six hundred pounds;" a list of which, "together with the *names of the persons* to whom the same are granted,

shall be laid before Parliament in twenty days after the beginning of each session, until the whole pension list shall be reduced to ninety thousand pounds." A provisory clause is afterwards added, "That it shall be lawful for the first commissioner of the treasury to return into the exchequer, any pension or annuity, *without a name*, on his making oath that such pension or annuity is not directly or indirectly for the benefit, use, or behoof of any member of the House of Commons."

But soon after that administration ended, and the party Mr. Burke acted with came into power, it appears from the circumstances I am going to relate, that Mr. Burke became himself a pensioner in disguise; in a similar manner as if a pension had been granted in the name of John Nokes, to be privately paid to and enjoyed by Tom Stiles. The name of Edmund Burke does not appear in the original transaction; but after the pension was obtained, Mr. Burke wanted to make the most of it at once, by selling or mortgaging it; and the gentleman in whose name the pension stands applied to one of the public offices for that purpose. This unfortunately brought forth the name of *Edmund Burke*, as the real pensioner of £1,500 per annum. When men trumpet forth what they call the blessings of the constitution, it ought to be known what sort of blessings they allude to.

As to the civil list of a million a year, it is not to be supposed that any one man can eat, drink or consume the whole upon himself. The case is, that above half the sum is annually apportioned among courtiers and court members of both houses, in places and offices altogether insignificant and perfectly useless as to every purpose of civil, rational and manly Government. For instance,

Of what use in the science and system of Government is what is called a lord chamberlain, a master and mistress of the robes, a master of the horse, a master of the

hawks, and a hundred other such things? Laws derive no additional force nor additional excellence from such mummery.

In the disbursements of the civil list for the year 1786 (which may be seen in Sir John St. Clair's *History of the Revenue*), are four separate charges for this mummery office of chamberlain:

First,	£38,778 17 —
Second,	3,000 — —
Third,	24,069 19 —
Fourth,	10,000 18 3
	£75,849 14 3

Besides £1,119 charged for alms.

From this sample the rest may be guessed at. As to the master of the hawks (there are no hawks kept, and if there were, it is no reason the people should pay the expense of feeding them, many of whom are put to it to get bread for their children), his salary is £1,372 10*s.*

And besides a list of items of this kind, sufficient to fill a quire of paper, the pension lists alone are £107,404 13*s.* 4*d.*, which is a greater sum than all the expenses of the federal Government in America amount to.

Among the items, there are two that I had no expectation of finding, and which, in this day of inquiry after civil list influence, ought to be exposed. The one is an annual payment of one thousand seven hundred pounds to the dissenting ministers in England, and the other, eight hundred pounds to those in Ireland.

This is the fact, and the distribution, as I am informed, is as follows: the whole sum of £1,700 is paid to one person, a dissenting minister in London, who divides it among eight others; and those eight among such others as they please. The lay body of the dissenters, and many of their principal ministers, have long considered it as dishonorable, and have endeavored

to prevent it, but still it continues to be secretly paid; and as the world has sometimes seen very fulsome addresses from parts of that body, it may naturally be supposed that the receivers, like bishops and other court clergy, are not idle in promoting them. How the money is distributed in Ireland, I know not.

To recount all the secret history of the civil list, is not the intention of this publication. It is sufficient in this place to expose its general character, and the mass of influence it keeps alive. It will necessarily become one of the objects of reform; and therefore enough is said to show that under its operation, no application to Parliament can be expected to succeed, nor can consistently be made.

Such reforms will not be promoted by the party that is in possession of those places, nor by the opposition who are waiting for them; and as to a *mere reform*, in the state of the representation, under the idea that another Parliament, differently elected from the present, but still a third component part of the same system, and subject to the control of the other two parts, will abolish those abuses, is altogether delusion; because it is not only impracticable on the ground of formality, but is unwisely exposing another set of men to the same corruptions that have tainted the present.

Were all the objects that require reform accomplished by a mere reform in the state of representation, the persons who compose the present Parliament might, with rather more propriety, be asked to abolish all the abuses themselves, than be applied to as the more instruments of doing it by a future Parliament. If the virtue be wanting to abolish the abuse, it is also wanting to act as the means, and the nation must, from necessity, proceed by some other plan.

Having thus endeavored to show what the abject condition of Parliament is, and the impropriety of going

a second time over the same ground that has before miscarried, I come to the remaining part of the subject.

There ought to be in the constitution of every country, a mode of referring back, on any extraordinary occasion, to the sovereign and original constituent power, which is the nation itself. The right of altering any part of a Government cannot, as already observed, reside in the Government, or that Government might make itself what it pleased.

It ought also to be taken for granted, that though a nation may feel inconvenience, either in the excess of taxation, or in the mode of expenditure, or in any thing else, it may not at first be sufficiently assured in what part of its Government the defect lies, or where the evil originates. It may be supposed to be in one part, and on inquiry be found to be in another, or partly in all. This obscurity is naturally interwoven with what are called mixed Governments.

Be, however, the reform to be accomplished whatever it may, it can only follow in consequence of obtaining a full knowledge of all the causes that have rendered such reform necessary, and every thing short of this is guesswork or frivolous cunning. In this case, it cannot be supposed that any application to Parliament can bring forward this knowledge. That body is itself the supposed cause, or one of the supposed causes, of the abuses in question ; and cannot be expected, and ought not to be asked, to give evidence against itself. The inquiry, therefore, which is of necessity the first step in the business, cannot be entrusted to Parliament, but must be undertaken by a distinct body of men, separated from every suspicion of corruption or influence.

Instead, then, of referring to rotten-boroughs and absurd corporations for Addresses, or hawking them about the country to be signed by a few dependent tenants, the real and effectual mode would be to come at once to

the point, and to ascertain the sense of the nation by electing a National Convention. By this method, as already observed, the general WILL, whether to reform or not, or what the reform shall be, or how far it shall extend, will be known, and it cannot be known by any other means. Such a body, empowered and supported by the nation, will have authority to demand information upon all matters necessary to be inquired into; and no minister, nor any other person, will dare to refuse it. It will then be seen whether seventeen millions of taxes are necessary, and for what purposes they are expended. The concealed pensioners will then be obliged to unmask; and the source of influence and corruption, if any such there be, will be laid open to the nation, not for the purpose of revenge, but of redress.

By taking this public and national ground, all objections against partial Addresses on the one side, or private associations on the other, will be done away; *the nation will decree its own reforms;* and the clamor about party and faction, or ins or outs, will become ridiculous.

The plan and organization of a convention is easy in practice.

In the first place, the number of inhabitants in every county can be sufficiently ascertained from the number of houses assessed to the house and window-light tax in each county. This will give the rule for apportioning the number of members to be elected to the national convention in each of the counties.

If the total number of inhabitants in England be seven millions, and the total number of members to be elected to the convention be one thousand, the number of members to be elected in a county, containing one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, will be twenty-one, and in like proportion for any other county.

As the election of a convention must, in order to ascertain the general sense of the nation, go on grounds

different from that of Parliamentary elections, the mode that best promises this end will have no difficulties to combat with from absurd customs and pretended rights. The right of every man will be the same, whether he lives in a city, a town, or a village. The custom of attaching rights to *place*, or in other words, to inanimate matter, instead of to *persons*, independently of place, is too absurd to make any part of a rational argument.

As every man in the nation, of the age of twenty-one years, pays taxes, either out of the property he possesses, or out of the product of his labor, which is property to him ; and is amenable in his own person to every law of the land ; so has every one the same equal right to vote, and no one part of the nation, nor any individual, has a right to dispute the right of another. The man who should do this ought to forfeit the exercise of his *own* right for a term of years. This would render the punishment consistent with the crime.

When a qualification to vote is regulated by years, it is placed on the firmest possible ground ; because the qualification is such, as nothing but dying before the time can take away ; and the equality of rights, as a principle, is recognized in the act of regulating the exercise. But when rights are placed upon, or made dependent upon property, they are on the most precarious of all tenures. "Riches make themselves wings, and fly away," and the rights fly with them ; and thus they become lost to the man when they would be of most value.

It is from a strange mixture of tyranny and cowardice, that exclusions have been set up and continued. The boldness to do wrong at first changes afterwards into cowardly craft, and at last into fear. The representatives in England appear now to act as if they were afraid to do right, even in part, lest it should awaken the nation to a sense of all the wrongs it has endured. This

case serves to show that the same conduct that best constitutes the safety of an individual, namely, a strict adherence to principle, constitutes also the safety of a Government, and that without it safety is but an empty name. When the rich plunder the poor of his rights, it becomes an example to the poor to plunder the rich of his property; for the rights of the one are as much property to him, as wealth is property to the other, and the *little all* is as dear as the *much*.

It is only by setting out on just principles that men are trained to be just to each other; and it will always be found, that when the rich protect the rights of the poor, the poor will protect the property of the rich. But the guarantee, to be effectual, must be parliamentarily reciprocal.

Exclusions are not only unjust, but they frequently operate as injuriously to the party who monopolizes, as to those who are excluded. When men seek to exclude others from participating in the exercise of any right, they should, at least, be assured that they can effectually perform the whole of the business they undertake; for, unless they do this, themselves will be losers by the monopoly. This has been the case with respect to the monopolized right of election. The monopolizing party has not been able to keep the Parliamentary representation, to whom the power of taxation was entrusted, in the state it ought to have been, and have thereby multiplied taxes upon themselves equally with those who were excluded.

A great deal has been, and will continue to be said, about disqualifications, arising from the commission of offences; but were this subject urged to its full extent, it would disqualify a great number of the present electors, together with their representatives; for, of all offences, none are more destructive to the morals of society than bribery and corruption. It is, therefore,

civility to such persons to pass this subject over, and to give them a fair opportunity of recovering, or rather of creating character.

Every thing, in the present mode of electioneering in England, is the reverse of what it ought to be, and the vulgarity that attends elections is no other than the natural consequence of inverting the order of the system.

In the first place, the candidate seeks the elector, instead of the elector seeking for a representative; and the electors are advertised as being in the interest of the candidate, instead of the candidate being in the interest of the electors. The candidate pays the elector for his vote, instead of the nation paying the representative for his time and attendance on public business. The complaint for an undue election is brought by the candidate: as if he, and not the electors, were the party aggrieved; and he takes on himself at any period of the election to break it up, by declining, as if the election was in his right and not in theirs.

The compact that was entered into at the last Westminster election between two of the candidates (Mr. Fox and Lord Hood), was an indecent violation of the principles of election. The candidates assumed, in their own persons, the rights of the electors; for it was only in the body of the electors, and not at all in the candidates, that the right of making any such compact or compromise, could exist. But the principle of election and representation is so completely done away, in every stage thereof, that inconsistency has no longer the power of surprising.

Neither from elections thus conducted, nor from rotten-borough Addressers, nor from county meetings promoted by placemen and pensioners, can the sense of the nation be known. It is still corruption appealing to itself. But a convention of a thousand persons, fairly elected, would bring every matter to a decided issue.

As to county meetings, it is only persons of leisure, or those who live near to the place of meeting, that can attend, and the number on such occasions is but like a drop in the bucket compared with the whole. The only consistent service which such meetings could render would be that of apportioning the county into convenient districts, and when this is done, each district might, according to its number of inhabitants, elect its quota of county members to the national convention; and the vote of each elector might be taken in the parish where he resided, either by ballot or by voice, as he should choose to give it.

A national convention thus formed would bring together the sense and opinions of every part of the nation, fairly taken. The science of Government and the interest of the public, and of the several parts thereof, would then undergo an ample and rational discussion, freed from the language of Parliamentary disguise.

But in all deliberations of this kind, though men have a right to reason with, and endeavor to convince each other upon any matter that respects their common good, yet, in point of practice, the majority of opinions, when known, forms a rule for the whole, and to this rule every good citizen practically conforms.

Mr. Burke, as if he knew (for every concealed pensioner has the opportunity of knowing), that the abuses acted under the present system, are too flagrant to be palliated, and that the majority of opinions, whenever such abuses should be made public, would be for a general and effectual reform, has endeavored to preclude the event, by sturdily denying the right of a majority of a nation to act as a whole. Let us bestow a thought upon this case.

When any matter is proposed as a subject for consultation, it necessarily implies some mode of decision. Common consent, arising from absolute necessity, has

placed this in a majority of opinions; because, without it, there can be no decision, and consequently no order. It is perhaps the only case in which mankind, however various in their ideas upon other matters, can consistently be unanimous; because it is a mode of decision derived from the primary original right of every individual concerned; *that* right being first individually exercised in giving an opinion, and whether that opinion shall arrange with the minority or the majority is a subsequent accidental thing that neither increases nor diminishes the individual original right itself. Prior to any debate, inquiry or investigation, it is not supposed to be known on which side the majority of opinions will fall, and, therefore, whilst this mode of decision secures to every one the right of giving an opinion, it admits to every one an equal chance in the ultimate event.

Among the matters that will present themselves to the consideration of a national convention, there is one, wholly of a domestic nature, but so marvelously loaded with confusion, as to appear at first sight almost impossible to be reformed. I mean the condition of what is called law.

But, if we examine into the cause from whence this confusion, now so much the subject of universal complaint, is produced, not only the remedy will immediately present itself, but with it, the means of preventing the like case hereafter.

In the first place, the confusion has generated itself from the absurdity of every Parliament assuming to be eternal in power, and the laws partake in a similar manner, of this assumption. They have no period of legal or natural expiration; and, however absurd in principle, or inconsistent in practice many of them have become, they still are, if not especially repealed, considered as making a part of the general mass. By this means the body of what is called law is spread over a space of

several hundred years, comprehending laws obsolete, laws repugnant, laws ridiculous, and every other kind of laws forgotten or remembered; and what renders the case still worse is, that the confusion multiplies with the progress of time.* To bring this misshapen monster into form, and to prevent its lapsing again into a wilderness state, only two things, and those very simple, are necessary: the first is, to review the whole mass of laws, and to bring forward such only as are worth retaining, and let all the rest drop; and to give to the laws so brought forward a new era, commencing from the time of such reform.

Secondly, that at the expiration of every twenty-one years (or any other stated period) a like review shall again be taken, and the laws, found proper to be retained, be again carried forward, commencing with that date, and the useless laws dropped and discontinued.

By this means there can be no obsolete laws, and scarcely such a thing as laws standing in direct or equivocal contradiction to each other, and every person will know the period of time to which he is to look back for all the laws in being.

It is worth remarking that while every other branch of science is brought within some commodious system, and the study of it simplified by easy methods, the laws take the contrary course, and become every year more complicated, entangled, confused and obscure.

Among the paragraphs which the attorney-general has taken from the *Rights of Man*, and put into his information, one is, that where I have said, "that with respect to regular law, there is *scarcely such a thing*."

As I do not know whether the attorney-general means to show this expression to be libellous, because it is *true*, or because it is *false*, I shall make no other reply to him in this place, than by remarking, that if almanac-makers

*In the time of Henry the Fourth, a law was passed making it felony "to multiply gold or silver, or to make use of the craft or multiplication," and this law remained two hundred and eighty-six years upon the statute books. It was then repealed as being ridiculous and injurious.

had not been more judicious than law-makers, the study of almanacs would by this time have become as abstruse as the study of the law, and we should hear of a library of almanacs as we now do of statutes; but by the simple operation of letting the obsolete matter drop, and carrying forward that only which is proper to be retained, all that is necessary to be known is found within the space of a year, and laws also admit of being kept within some given period. I shall here close this letter, so far as it respects the Addressers, the Proclamation and the Prosecution; and shall offer a few observations to the society, styling itself "THE FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE."

That the science of Government is beginning to be better understood than in former times, and that the age of fiction and political superstition and of craft and mystery is passing away, are matters which the experience of every day proves to be true, as well in England as in other countries.

As therefore it is impossible to calculate the silent progress of opinion, and also impossible to govern a nation after it has changed its habits of thinking, by the craft or policy that it was governed by before, the only true method to prevent popular discontents and commotions is to throw, by every fair and rational argument, all the light upon the subject that can possibly be thrown; and at the same time, to open the means of collecting the general sense of the nation; and this cannot, as already observed, be done by any plan so effectually as a National Convention. Here individual opinion will quiet itself by having a centre to rest upon. The society already mentioned (which is made up of men of various descriptions, but chiefly of those called Foxites), appears to me, either to have taken wrong grounds from want of judgment, or to have acted with cunning reserve. It is now amusing the people with a new phrase, namely, that of "a temperate and moderate reform," the interpre-

tation of which is, *a continuance of the abuses as long as possible. If we cannot hold all let us hold some.*

Who are those that are frightened at reforms? Are the public afraid that their taxes should be lessened too much? Are they afraid that sinecure places and pensions should be abolished too fast? Are the poor afraid that their condition should be rendered too comfortable? Is the worn out mechanic, or the aged and decayed tradesman, frightened at the prospect of receiving ten pounds a year out of the surplus taxes? Is the soldier frightened at the thoughts of his discharge and three shillings per week during life? Is the sailor afraid that press-warrants will be abolished? The society mistakes the fears of borough-mongers, placemen and pensioners for the fears of the people; and the *temperate and moderate reform* it talks of is calculated to suit the condition of the former.

Those words, "temperate and moderate," are words either of political cowardice, or of cunning, or seduction. A thing moderately good, is not so good as it ought to be. Moderation in temper is always a virtue; but moderation in principle is a species of vice. But who is to be the judge of what is a temperate and moderate reform? The society is the representative of nobody; neither can the unrepresented part of the nation commit this power to those in Parliament, in whose election they had no choice; and, therefore, even upon the ground the society has taken, recourse must be had to a national convention.

The objection which Mr. Fox made to Mr. Grey's proposed motion for a Parliamentary reform was, that it contained no plan. It certainly did not. But the plan very easily presents itself; and whilst it is fair for all parties, it prevents the dangers that might otherwise arise from private or popular discontent.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO LORD ONSLOW,

Lord Lieutenant of the County of Surry, on the subject of the late excellent PROCLAMATION :—*or the* CHAIRMAN *who shall preside at the meeting to be held at Epsom, June 18.*

London, June 17, 1792.

SIR : I have seen in the public newspapers the following advertisement, to wit :

"To the nobility, gentlemen, clergy, freeholders and other inhabitants of the county of Surry.

"At the requisition and desire of several of the freeholders of the county, I am, in the absence of the sheriff, to desire the favor of your attendance at a meeting to be held at Epsom, on Monday, the 18th instant, at 12 o'clock at noon, to consider of an humble address to his MAJESTY, to express our grateful approbation of his MAJESTY'S paternal and well-timed attendance to the public welfare, in his late most gracious proclamation against the enemies of our happy constitution.

(Signed.) "ONSLOW CRANLEY."

Taking it for granted that the aforesaid advertisement, equally as obscure as the proclamation to which it refers, has nevertheless some meaning, and is intended to effect some purpose ; and as a prosecution (whether wisely or unwisely, justly or unjustly) is commenced against a work entitled the *Rights of Man*, of which I have the honor and happiness to be the author ; I feel it necessary to address this letter to you, and to request that it may be read publicly to the gentlemen who shall meet at Epsom in consequence of the advertisement.

The work now under prosecution is, I conceive, the same work which is intended to be suppressed by the aforesaid proclamation. Admitting this to be the case, the gentlemen of the county of Surry are called upon by somebody to condemn a work, and they are at the same time forbidden by the proclamation to know what that work is; and they are further called upon to give their aid and assistance to prevent other people from knowing it also. — It is therefore necessary that the author, for his own justification, as well as to prevent the gentlemen who shall meet from being imposed upon by misrepresentation, should give some outlines of the principles and plans which that work contains.

The work, sir, in question contains, first, an investigation of general principles of Government.

It also distinguishes Government into two classes or systems; the one the hereditary system, the other the representative system; and it compares these two systems with each other.

It shows that what is called hereditary Government cannot exist as a matter of right; because hereditary Government always means a Government yet to come; and the case always is, that those who are to live afterwards have always the same right to establish a Government for themselves as the people who had lived before them.

It also shows the defect to which hereditary Government is unavoidably subject: that it must, from the nature of it, throw Government into the hands of men totally unworthy of it from the want of principle, or unfitted for it from want of capacity. James II. and many others are recorded in the English history as proofs of the former of those cases, and instances are to be found all over Europe to prove the truth of the latter.

It then shows that the representative system is the only true system of Government; that it is also the only

system under which the liberties of any people can be permanently secure ; and, further, that it is the only one that can continue the same equal probability at all times of admitting of none but men properly qualified, both by principles and abilities, into Government, and of excluding such as are otherwise.

The work shows also, by plans and calculations not hitherto denied nor controverted, not even by the prosecution that is commenced, that the taxes now existing may be reduced at least six millions, that taxes may be entirely taken off from the poor, who are computed at one-third of the nation ; and that taxes on the other two-thirds may be considerably reduced ; that the aged poor may be comfortably provided for, and the children of poor families properly educated ; that fifteen thousand soldiers, and the same number of sailors, may be allowed three shillings per week during life out of the surplus taxes ; and also that a proportionate allowance may be made to the officers, and the pay of the remaining soldiers and sailors be raised ; and that it is better to apply the surplus taxes to those purposes than to consume them upon lazy and profligate placemen and pensioners; and that the revenue, said to be twenty thousand pounds per annum, raised by a tax upon coals, and given to the Duke of Richmond, is a gross imposition upon all the people of London, and ought to be instantly abolished.

This, sir, is a concise abstract of the principles and plans contained in the work that is now prosecuted, and for the suppression of which the proclamation appears to be intended ; but as it is impossible that I can, in the compass of a letter, bring into view all the matters contained in the work, and as it is proper that the gentlemen who may compose that meeting should know what the merits or demerits of it are, before they come to any resolutions, either directly or indirectly relating thereto, I request the honor of presenting them with one hun-

dred copies of the second part of the *Rights of Man*, and also one thousand copies of my letter to Mr. Dundas, which I have directed to be sent to Epsom for that purpose; and I beg the favor of the chairman to take the trouble of presenting them to the gentlemen who shall meet on that occasion, with my sincere wishes for their happiness, and for that of the nation in general.

Having now closed thus much of the subject of my letter, I next come to speak of what has relation to me personally. I am well aware of the delicacy that attends it, but the purpose of calling the meeting appears to me so inconsistent with that justice that is always due between man and man, that it is proper I should (as well on account of the gentlemen who may meet, as on my own account) explain myself fully and candidly thereon.

I have already informed the gentlemen, that a prosecution is commenced against a work of which I have the honor and happiness to be the author; and I have good reasons for believing that the proclamation which the gentlemen are called to consider, and to present an address upon, is purposely calculated to give an impression to the jury before whom that matter is to come. In short, that it is dictating a verdict by proclamation; and I consider the instigators of the meeting to be held at Epsom, as aiding and abetting the same improper and, in my opinion, illegal purpose, and that in a manner very artfully contrived, as I shall now show.

Had a meeting been called of the freeholders of the county of Middlesex, the gentlemen who had composed that meeting would have rendered themselves objectionable as persons to serve on a jury, before whom the judicial case was afterwards to come. But by calling a meeting out of the county of Middlesex, that matter is artfully avoided, and the gentlemen of Surry are summoned, as if it were intended thereby to give a tone to

the sort of verdict which the instigators of the meeting no doubt wish should be brought in, and to give countenance to the jury in so doing.

I am, sir, with much respect to the
Gentlemen who shall meet,
Their and your obedient and humble servant,
THOMAS PAINE.

LETTER II.

TO THE SAME.

London, June 21, 1792.

SIR: When I wrote you the letter which Mr. Horne Tooke did me the favor to present to you, as chairman of the meeting held at Epsom, Monday, June 18, it was not with much expectation that you would do me the justice of permitting or recommending it to be publicly read. I am well aware that the signature of Thomas Paine has something in it dreadful to sinecure placemen and pensioners; and when you, on seeing the letter opened, informed the meeting that it was signed Thomas Paine, and added in a note of exclamation, "the common enemy of us all," you spoke one of the greatest truths you ever uttered, if you confine the expression to men of the same description with yourself; men living in indolence and luxury, on the spoil and labors of the public.

The letter has since appeared in the *Argus*, and probably in other papers. It will justify itself; but if any thing on that account hath been wanting, your conduct at the meeting would have supplied the omission. You there sufficiently proved that I was not mistaken in supposing that the meeting was called to give an indirect

aid to the prosecution commenced against a work, the reputation of which will long outlive the memory of the pensioner I am writing to.

When meetings, sir, are called by the partisans of the court, to preclude the nation the right of investigating systems and principles of Government, and of exposing errors and defects under the pretence of prosecuting any individual—it furnishes an additional motive for maintaining sacred that violated right.

The principles and arguments contained in the work in question, *Rights of Man*, have stood, and they now stand, and I believe ever will stand, unrefuted. They are stated in a fair and open manner to the world, and they have already received the public approbation of a greater number of men, of the best of characters, of every denomination of religion, and of every rank in life (placemen and pensioners excepted), than all the juries that shall meet in England for ten years to come, will amount to; and I have, moreover, good reasons for believing that the approvers of that work, as well private as public, are already more numerous than all the present electors throughout the nation.

Not less than forty pamphlets, intended as answers thereto, have appeared, and as suddenly disappeared; scarcely are the titles of any of them remembered, notwithstanding their endeavors have been aided by all the daily abuse which the court and ministerial newspapers, for almost a year and a half could bestow, both upon the work and the author; and now that every attempt to refute, and every abuse has failed, the invention of calling the work a libel has been hit upon, and the discomfited party has pusillanimously retreated to prosecution and a jury and obscure addresses.

As I well know that a long letter from me will not be agreeable to you, I will relieve your uneasiness by making it as short as I conveniently can; and will con-

clude it with taking up the subject at that part where Mr. Horne Tooke was interrupted from going on when at the meeting.

That gentleman was stating, that the situation you stood in rendered it improper for you to appear *actively* in a scene in which your private interest was too visible; that you were a bedchamber lord at a thousand a year, and a pensioner at three thousand pounds a year more; and here he was stopped by the little, but noisy circle, you had collected round. Permit me then, sir, to add an explanation to his words, for the benefit of your neighbors, and with which, and a few observations, I shall close my letter.

When it was reported in the English newspapers, some short time since, that the Empress of Russia had given to one of her minions a large tract of country, and several thousands of peasants as property, it very justly provoked indignation and abhorrence in those who heard it. But if we compare the mode practiced in England, with that which appears to us so abhorrent in Russia, it will be found to amount to very near the same thing; for example—

As the whole of the revenue in England is drawn by taxes from the pockets of the people, those things called gifts and grants (of which kind are all pensions and sinecure places) are paid out of that stock. The difference, therefore, between the two modes is, that in England the money is collected by the Government, and then given to the pensioner, and in Russia he is left to collect it for himself. The smallest sum which the poorest family in a county so near London as Surry can be supposed to pay annually of taxes, is not less than five pounds; and as your sinecure of one thousand, and pension of three thousand per annum, are made up of taxes paid by eight hundred such poor families, it comes to the same thing as if the eight hundred families had

been given to you, as in Russia, and you had collected the money on your account. Were you to say that you are not quartered particularly on the people of Surry, but on the nation at large, the objection would amount to nothing; for as there are more pensioners than counties, every one may be considered as quartered on that in which he lives.

What honor or happiness you can derive from being the *principal pauper* of the neighborhood, and occasioning a greater expense than the poor, the aged and the infirm, for ten miles around you, I leave you to enjoy. At the same time I can see that it is no wonder you should be strenuous in suppressing a book which strikes at the root of these abuses. No wonder that you should be against reforms, against the freedom of the press, and the right of investigation. To you, and to others of your description, these are dreadful things; but you should also consider, that the motives which prompt you to *act*, ought, by reflection, to compel you to be *silent*.

Having now returned your compliment, and sufficiently tired your patience, I take my leave of you with mentioning, that if you had not prevented my former letter from being read at the meeting, you would not have had the trouble of reading this; and also with requesting, that the next time you call me "*a common enemy*," you would add, "*of us, sinecure placemen and pensioners.*"

I am, sir,

&c., &c., &c.,

THOMAS PAINE.

DISSERTATION ON FIRST PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT.

THERE is no subject more interesting to every man than the subject of government. His security, be he rich or poor, and in a great measure his prosperity, is connected therewith; it is therefore his interest, as well as his duty, to make himself acquainted with its principles, and what the practice ought to be.

Every art and science, however imperfectly known at first, has been studied, improved, and brought to what we call perfection, by the progressive labors of succeeding generations; but the science of government has stood still. No improvement has been made in the principle, and scarcely any in the practice, till the American revolution began. In all the countries of Europe (except in France) the same forms and systems that were erected in the remote ages of ignorance still continue, and their antiquity is put in the place of principle; it is forbidden to investigate their origin or by what right they exist. If it be asked how has this happened, the answer is easy; they are established on a principle that is false, and they employ their power to prevent detection.

Notwithstanding the mystery with which the science of government has been enveloped, for the purpose of enslaving, plundering and imposing upon mankind, it is of all things the least mysterious and the most easy to be understood. The meanest capacity cannot be at a

loss, if it begins its inquiries at the right point. Every art and science has some point or alphabet, at which the study of that art or science begins, and by the assistance of which the progress is facilitated. The same method ought to be observed with respect to the science of government.

Instead, then, of embarrassing the subject in the outset with the numerous subdivisions under which different forms of government have been classed, such as aristocracy, democracy, oligarchy, monarchy, &c., the better method will be to begin with what may be called primary divisions, or those under which all the several subdivisions will be comprehended.

The primary divisions are but two.

First. Government by election and representation.

Second. Government by hereditary succession.

All the several forms and systems of government, however numerous or diversified, class themselves under one or other of these primary divisions; for either they are on the system of representation, or on that of hereditary succession. As to that equivocal thing called mixed government, such as the late government of Holland and the present government of England, it does not make an exception to the general rule, because the parts, separately considered, are either representative or hereditary.

Beginning, then, our inquiries at this point, we have first to examine into the nature of those two primary divisions. If they are equally right in principle, it is mere matter of opinion which we prefer. If the one be demonstratively better than the other, that difference directs our choice; but if one of them should be so absolutely false as not to have a right to existence, the matter settles itself at once; because a negative proved on one thing, where two only are offered, and one must be accepted, amounts to an affirmative on the other.

The revolutions that are now spreading themselves in

the world have their origin in this state of the case, and the present war is a conflict between the representative system, founded on the rights of the people, and the hereditary system, founded in usurpation. As to what are called monarchy, royalty and aristocracy, they do not, either as things or as terms, sufficiently describe the hereditary system; they are but secondary things or signs of the hereditary system, and which fall of themselves if that system has not a right to exist. Were there no such terms as monarchy, royalty and aristocracy, or were other terms substituted in their place, the hereditary system, if it continued, would not be altered thereby. It would be the same system under any other titulary name as it is now.

The character, therefore, of the revolutions of the present day distinguishes itself most definitely by grounding itself on the system of representative government, in opposition to the hereditary. No other distinction reaches the whole of the principle.

Having thus opened the case generally, I proceed, in the first place, to examine the hereditary system, because it has the priority in point of time. The representative system is the invention of the modern world; and that no doubt may arise as to my own opinion, I declare it beforehand, which is, *that there is not a problem in Euclid more mechanically true, than that hereditary government has not a right to exist. When, therefore, we take from any man the exercise of hereditary power, we take away that which he never had the right to possess, and which no law or custom could, or ever can, give him a title to.*

The arguments that have hitherto been employed against the hereditary system have been chiefly founded upon the absurdity of it, and its incompetency to the purposes of good government. Nothing can present to our judgment, or to our imagination, a figure of greater

absurdity than that of seeing the government of a nation fall, as it frequently does, into the hands of a lad necessarily destitute of experience, and often little better than a fool. It is an insult to every man of years, of character and of talents in a country. The moment we begin to reason upon the hereditary system, it falls into derision ; let but a single idea begin, and a thousand will soon follow. Insignificance, imbecility, childhood, dotage, want of moral character ; in fine, every defect, serious or laughable, unite to hold up the hereditary system as a figure of ridicule. Leaving, however, the ridiculousness of the thing to the reflections of the reader, I proceed to the more important part of the question, namely, whether such a system has a right to exist?

To be satisfied of the right of a thing to exist, we must be satisfied that it had a right to begin. If it had not a right to begin, it has not a right to continue. By what right, then, did the hereditary system begin? Let a man but ask himself this question, and he will find that he cannot satisfy himself with an answer.

The right which any man, or any family, had to set himself up at first to govern a nation, and to establish itself hereditarily, was no other than the right which Robespierre had to do the same thing in France. If he had none, they had none. If they had any, he had as much ; for it is impossible to discover superiority of right in any family, by virtue of which hereditary government could begin. The Capets, the Guelphs, the Robespierres, the Marats, are all on the same standing as to the question of right. It belongs exclusively to none.

It is one step towards liberty to perceive that hereditary government could not begin as an exclusive right in any family. The next point will be, whether, having once began, it could grow into a right by the influence of time?

This would be supposing an absurdity; for either it is putting time in the place of principle, or making it superior to principle: whereas no time has more connection with, or influence upon principle, than principle has upon time. The wrong which began a thousand years ago is as much a wrong as if it began to-day; and the right which originates to-day, is as much a right as if it had the sanction of a thousand years. Time with respect to principles is an eternal *now:* it has no operation upon them: it changes nothing of their nature and qualities. But what have we to do with a thousand years? Our life-time is but a short portion of that period, and if we find the wrong in existence as soon as we begin to live, that is the point of time at which it begins to us; and our right to resist it is the same as if it had never existed before.

As hereditary government could not begin as a natural right in any family, nor derive after its commencement any right from time, we have only to examine whether there exists in a nation a right to set it up, and establish it by what is called law, as has been done in England? I answer *no;* and that any law or any constitution made for that purpose, is an act of treason against the right of every minor in the nation at the time it is made, and against the rights of all succeeding generations. I shall speak upon each of those cases. First, of the minor, at the time such law is made. Secondly, of the generations that are to follow.

A nation, in a collective sense, comprehends all the individuals of whatever age, from those just born to those just dying. Of these, one part will be minors and the other aged. The average of life is not exactly the same in every climate and country, but in general, the minority in years are the majority in numbers; that is, the number of persons under twenty-one years is greater than the number of persons above that age. This dif-

ference in number is not necessary to the establishment of the principle I mean to lay down, but it serves to show the justice of it more strongly. The principle would be equally as good, if the majority in years were also the majority in numbers.

The rights of minors are as sacred as the rights of the aged. The difference is altogether in the different ages of the two parties, and nothing in the nature of the rights. The rights are the same rights, and are to be preserved inviolate for the inheritance of the minors when they shall come of age. During the minority of minors their rights are under the sacred guardianship of the aged. The minor cannot surrender them; the guardian cannot dispossess him; consequently, the aged part of a nation, who are the law-makers for the *time being*, and who, in the march of life, are but a few years ahead of those who are yet minors, and to whom they must shortly give place, have not, and cannot have the right to make a law to set up and establish hereditary government, or, to speak more distinctly, *an hereditary succession of governors;* because it is an attempt to deprive every minor in the nation, at the time such a law is made, of his inheritance of rights when he shall come of age, and to subjugate him to a system of government to which, during his minority, he could neither consent nor object.

If a person, who is a minor at the time such a law is proposed, had happened to have been born a few years sooner, so as to be of the age of twenty-one years at the time of proposing it, his right to have objected against it, to have exposed the injustice and tyrannical principles of it, and to have voted against it, will be admitted on all sides. If, therefore, the law operates to prevent his exercising the same rights after he comes of age, as he would have had a right to exercise had he been of age at the time, it is, undeniably, a law to take away

and annul the rights of every person in the nation who shall be a minor at the time of making such a law, and, consequently the right to make it cannot exist.

I come now to speak of government by hereditary succession, as it applies to succeeding generations; and to show that in this case, as in the case of minors, there does not exist in a nation a right to set it up.

A nation, though continually existing, is continually in a state of renewal and succession. It is never stationary. Every day produces new births, carries minors forward to maturity, and old persons from the stage. In this ever-running flood of generations there is no part superior in authority to another. Could we conceive an idea of superiority in any, at what point of time, or in what century of the world, are we to fix it? To what cause are we to ascribe it? By what evidence are we to prove it? By what criterion are we to know it? A single reflection will teach us that our ancestors, like ourselves, were but tenants for life in the great freehold of rights. The fee-absolute was not in them, it is not in us; it belongs to the whole family of man, through all ages. If we think otherwise than this, we think either as slaves or as tyrants.—As slaves, if we think that any former generation had a right to bind us; as tyrants, if we think that we have authority to bind the generations that are to follow.

It may not be inapplicable to the subject to endeavor to define what is to be understood by a generation, in the sense of the word as here used.

As a natural term its meaning is sufficiently clear. The father, the son, the grandson, are so many distinct generations. But when we speak of a generation, as describing the persons in whom legal authority resides, as distinct from another generation of the same description who are to succeed them, it comprehends all those who are above the age of twenty-one years at the time

that we count from ; and a generation of this kind will continue in authority between fourteen and twenty-one years, that is, until the number of minors, who shall have arrived at age, shall be greater than the number of persons remaining of the former stock.

For example : if France, at this or any other moment, contains twenty-four millions of souls, twelve millions will be males and twelve females. Of the twelve millions of males, six millions will be of the age of twenty-one years, and six will be under, and the authority to govern will reside in the first six. But every day will make some alteration, and in twenty-one years every one of those minors who survives will have arrived at age, and the greater part of the former stock will be gone ; the majority of persons then living, in whom the legal authority resides, will be composed of those who, twenty-one years before, had no legal existence. Those will be fathers and grandfathers in their turn, and, in the next twenty-one years (or less), another race of minors, arrived at age, will succeed them, and so on.

As this is ever the case, and as every generation is equal in rights to another, it consequently follows that there cannot be a right in any to establish government by hereditary succession, because it would be supposing itself possessed of a right superior to the rest, namely, that of commanding by its own authority how the world shall be hereafter governed, and who shall govern it. Every age and generation is, and must be (as a matter of right), as free to act for itself in all cases, as the age and generation that preceded it. The vanity and presumption of governing beyond the grave is the most ridiculous and insolent of all tyrannies. Man has no property in man, neither has one generation a property in the generations that are to follow.

In the first part of the *Rights of Man* I have spoken of government by hereditary succession ; and I will here

close the subject with an extract from that work, which states it under the two following heads :

"*First.* Of the right of any family to establish itself with hereditary powers.

"*Second.* Of the right of a nation to establish a particular family.

"With respect to the first of those heads, that of a family establishing itself with hereditary powers on its own authority, independent of the nation, all men will concur in calling it despotism, and it would be trespassing on their understanding to attempt to prove it.

"But the second head, that of a nation, that is, of a generation for the time being, establishing a particular family with hereditary powers, it does not present itself as despotism on the first reflection ; but if men will permit a second reflection to take place, and carry that reflection forward, even but one remove out of their own persons to that of their offspring, they will then see, that hereditary succession becomes the same despotism to others, which the first persons reprobated for themselves. It operates to preclude the consent of the succeeding generation, and the preclusion of consent is despotism.

"In order to see this matter more clearly, let us consider the generation which undertakes to establish a family with hereditary powers, separately from the generations which are to follow.

"The generation which first selects a person and puts him at the head of its government, either with the title of king, or any other nominal distinction, acts its own choice as a free agent for itself, be that choice wise or foolish. The person so set up is *not hereditary*, but selected and appointed ; and the generation which sets him up does not live under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice. Were the person so set up, and the generation who sets him up, to live forever, it never could become hereditary succes-

sion, and, of consequence, hereditary succession could only follow on the death of the first parties.

"As, therefore, hereditary succession is out of the question with respect to the first generation, we have next to consider the character in which that generation acts towards the commencing generation, and to all succeeding ones.

"It assumes a character to which it has neither right nor title; for it changes itself from a legislator to a testator, and affects to make a will and testament which is to have operation after the demise of the makers, to bequeath the government; and it not only attempts to bequeath, but to establish on the succeeding generation a new and different form of government under which itself lived. Itself, as already observed, lived not under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice; and it now attempts, by virtue of a will and testament, which it has not authority to make, to take from the commencing generation, and from all the future ones, the right and free agency by which itself acted.

"In whatever light hereditary succession, as growing out of the will and testament of some former generation, presents itself, it is both criminal and absurd. A cannot make a will to take from B his property and give it to C; yet this is the manner in which what is called hereditary succession by law operates. A certain generation makes a will, under the form of a law, to take away the rights of the commencing generation, and of all future generations, and convey those rights to a third person, who afterwards comes forward and assumes the government in consequence of that illicit conveyance."

The history of the English Parliament furnishes an example of this kind; and which merits to be recorded, as being the greatest instance of legislative ignorance and want of principle that is to be found in the history of any country. The case is as follows:

The English Parliament of 1688 imported a man and his wife from Holland, William and Mary, and made them king and queen of England. Having done this, the said Parliament made a law to convey the government of the country to the heirs of William and Mary, in the following words: "We, the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, do, in the name of the people of England, most humbly and faithfully submit *ourselves, our heirs and posterities*, to William and Mary, *their heirs and posterities*, forever." And in a subsequent law, as quoted by Edmund Burke, the said Parliament, in the name of the people of England then living, *binds the said people, their heirs and posterities, to William and Mary, their heirs and posterities, to the end of time.*

It is not sufficient that we laugh at the ignorance of such law-makers; it is necessary that we reprobate their want of principle. The constituent Assembly of France (1789), fell into the same vice as the Parliament of England had done, and assumed to establish an hereditary succession in the family of the Capets, as an act of the constitution of that year. That every nation, *for the time being*, has a right to govern itself as it pleases, must always be admitted, but government by hereditary succession is government for another race of people, and not for itself; and as those on whom it is to operate are not yet in existence, or are minors, so neither is the right in existence to set it up for them, and to assume such a right is treason against the rights of posterity.

I here close the arguments on the first head, that of government by hereditary succession; and proceed to the second, that of government by election and representation; or, as it may be concisely expressed, *representative government*, in contradistinction to *hereditary government.*

Reasoning by exclusion, if *hereditary government* has

not a right to exist, and that it has not is proveable, *representative government* is admitted of course.

In contemplating government by election and representation, we amuse not ourselves in inquiring when or how, or by what right it began. Its origin is ever in view. Man is himself the origin and the evidence of the right. It appertains to him in right of his existence, and his person is the title-deed.

The true and only true basis of representative government is equality of rights. Every man has a right to one vote, and no more, in the choice of representatives. The rich have no more right to exclude the poor from the right of voting, or of electing and being elected, than the poor have to exclude the rich ; and wherever it is attempted, or proposed, on either side, it is a question of force, and not of rights. Who is he that would exclude another? That other has a right to exclude him.

That which is now called aristocracy implies an inequality of rights ; but who are the persons that have a right to establish this inequality? Will the rich exclude themselves? No! Will the poor exclude themselves? No! By what right then can any be excluded? It would be a question, if any man or class of men, have a right to exclude themselves ; but be this as it may, they cannot have the right to exclude another. The poor will not delegate such a right to the rich, nor the rich to the poor, and to assume it is not only to assume arbitrary power, but to assume a right to commit robbery. Personal rights, of which the right of voting for representatives is one, are a species of property of the most sacred kind ; and he that would employ his pecuniary property, or presume upon the influence it gives him, to dispossess or rob another of his property of rights, uses that pecuniary property as he would use fire-arms, and merits to have it taken from him.

Inequality of rights is created by a combination in one

part of the community to exclude another part from its rights. Whenever it may be made an article of a constitution or a law, that the right of voting, or of electing and being elected, shall appertain exclusively to persons possessing a certain quantity of property, be it little or much, it is a combination of the persons possessing that quantity, to exclude those who do not possess the same quantity. It is investing themselves with powers as a self-created part of society, to the exclusion of the rest.

It is always to be taken for granted, that those who oppose an equality of rights never mean the exclusion should take place on themselves; and in this view of the case, pardoning the vanity of the thing, aristocracy is a subject of laughter. This self-soothing vanity is encouraged by another idea not less selfish, which is, that the opposers conceive they are playing a safe game, in which there is a chance to gain and none to lose; that at any rate the doctrine of equality includes *them*, and that if they cannot get more rights than those whom they oppose and would exclude, they shall not have less. This opinion has already been fatal to thousands, who, not contented with *equal rights*, have sought more till they lost all, and experienced in themselves the degrading *inequality* they endeavored to fix upon others.

In any view of the case it is dangerous and impolitic, sometimes ridiculous and always unjust, to make property the criterion of the right of voting. If the sum, or value of the property upon which the right is to take place be considerable, it will exclude a majority of the people, and unite them in a common interest against the government and against those who support it, and as the power is always with the majority, they can overturn such a government and its supporters whenever they please.

If, in order to avoid this danger, a small quantity of property be fixed, as the criterion of the right, it ex-

hibits liberty in disgrace, by putting it in competition with accident and insignificance. When a brood-mare shall fortunately produce a foal or a mule that, by being worth the sum in question, shall convey to its owner the right of voting, or by its death take it from him, in whom does the origin of such a right exist? Is it in the man or in the mule? When we consider how many ways property may be acquired without merit and lost without a crime, we ought to spurn the idea of making it a criterion of rights.

But the offensive part of the case is, that this exclusion from the right of voting implies a stigma on the moral character of the persons excluded; and this is what no part of the community has a right to pronounce upon another part. No external circumstance can justify it; wealth is no proof of moral character; nor poverty of the want of it. On the contrary, wealth is often the presumptive evidence of dishonesty; and poverty the negative evidence of innocence. If, therefore, property, whether little or much, be made a criterion, the means by which that property has been acquired ought to be made a criterion also.

The only ground upon which exclusion from the right of voting is consistent with justice, would be to inflict it as a punishment, for a certain time, upon those who should propose to take away that right from others. The right of voting for representatives is the primary right by which other rights are protected. To take away this right is to reduce a man to slavery, for slavery consists in being subject to the will of another, and he that has not a vote in the election of representatives is in this case. The proposal, therefore, to disfranchise any class of men is as criminal as the proposal to take away property. When we speak of right, we ought always to unite with it the idea of duties: rights become duties by reciprocity. The right which I enjoy it

becomes my duty to guarantee to another, and he to me; and those who violate the duty justly incur a forfeiture of the right.

In a political view of the case, the strength and permanent security of government is in proportion to the number of people interested in supporting it. The true policy, therefore, is to interest the whole by an equality of rights, for the danger arises from exclusions. It is possible to exclude men from the right of voting, but it is impossible to exclude them from the right of rebelling against that exclusion; and when all other rights are taken away, the right of rebellion is made perfect.

While men could be persuaded they had no rights, or that rights appertained only to a certain class of men, or that government was a thing existing in right of itself, it was not difficult to govern them authoritatively. The ignorance in which they were held, and the superstition in which they were instructed, furnished the means of doing it; but when the ignorance is gone, and the superstition with it—when they perceive the imposition that has been acted upon them—when they reflect that the cultivator and the manufacturer are the primary means of all the wealth that exists in the world, beyond what nature spontaneously produces—when they begin to feel their consequence by their usefulness, and their right as members of society, it is then no longer possible to govern them as before. The fraud once detected cannot be reacted. To attempt it is to provoke derision or invite destruction.

That property will ever be unequal is certain. Industry, superiority of talents, or dexterity of management, extreme frugality, fortunate opportunities, or the opposite, or the mean of those things, will ever produce that effect, without having recourse to the harsh, ill-sounding names of avarice and oppression; and besides this, there are some men who, though they do not

despise wealth, will not stoop to the drudgery of the means of acquiring it, nor will be troubled with the care of it beyond their wants or their independence; whilst in others there is an avidity to obtain it by every means not punishable; it makes the sole business of their lives, and they follow it as a religion. All that is required with respect to property, is to obtain it *honestly* and not employ it *criminally;* but it is always criminally employed when it is made the criterion for exclusive rights.

In institutions that are purely pecuniary, such as that of a bank, or a commercial company, the rights of the members composing that company are wholly created by the property they invest therein; and no other rights are represented in the government of that company than what arise out of that property; neither has that government cognizance of *any thing but property.*

But the case is totally different with respect to the institution of civil government, organized on the system of representation. Such a government has cognizance of *every thing* and of *every man* as a member of the national society, whether he has property or not; and, therefore, the principle requires that every man and *every kind of right* be represented, of which the right to acquire and to hold property is but one, and that not of the most essential kind. The protection of a man's person is more sacred than the protection of property; and, besides this, the faculty of performing any kind of work or services by which he acquires a livelihood, or maintaining his family, is of the nature of property. It is property to him; he has acquired it; and it is as much the object of his protection, as exterior property, possessed without that faculty, can be the object of protection to another person.

I have always believed that the best security for property, be it much or little, is to remove from every

part of the community, as far as can possibly be done, every cause of complaint and every motive to violence; and this can only be done by an equality of rights. When rights are secure, property is secure in consequence. But when property is made a pretence for unequal or exclusive rights, it weakens the right to hold the property, and provokes indignation and tumult; for it is unnatural to believe that property can be secure under the guarantee of a society injured in its rights by the influence of that property.

Next to the injustice and ill policy of making property a pretence for exclusive rights, is the unaccountable absurdity of giving to mere *sound* the idea of property, and annexing to it certain rights; for what else is a *title* but sound? Nature is often giving to the world some extraordinary men, who arrive at fame by merit and universal consent, such as Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, &c. They were truly great or noble. But when government sets up a manufactory of nobles, it is as absurd as if she undertook to manufacture wise men. *Her nobles are all counterfeits.*

As property, honestly obtained, is best secured by an equality of rights, so ill-gotten property depends for protection on a monopoly of rights. He who has robbed another of his property will next endeavor to disarm him of his rights to secure that property; for when the robber becomes the legislator he believes himself secure. That part of the government of England that is called the House of Lords was originally composed of persons who had committed the robberies of which I have been speaking. It was an association for the protection of the property they had stolen.

But besides the criminality of the origin of aristocracy, it has an injurious effect on the moral and physical character of man. Like slavery, it debilitates the human faculties; for as the mind, bowed down by slavery, loses

in silence its elastic powers, so in the contrary extreme when it is buoyed up by folly, it becomes incapable of exerting them, and dwindles into imbecility. It is impossible that a mind employed upon ribbons and titles can ever be great. The childishness of the objects consumes the man.

It is at all times necessary, and more particularly so during the progress of a revolution, and until right ideas confirm themselves by habit, that we frequently refresh our patriotism by reference to first principles. It is by tracing things to their origin that we learn to understand them : and it is by keeping that line and that origin always in view that we never forget them.

An inquiry into the origin of rights will demonstrate to us that *rights* are not *gifts* from one man to another, nor from one class of men to another ; for who is he who could be the first giver, or by what principle, or on what authority could he possess the right of giving? A declaration of rights is not a creation of them, nor a donation of them. It is a manifest of the principle by which they exist, followed by a detail of what the rights are ; for every civil right has a natural right for its foundation, and it includes the principle of a reciprocal guarantee of those rights from man to man. As, therefore, it is impossible to discover any origin of rights otherwise than in the origin of man, it consequently follows, that rights appertain to man in right of his existence only, and must therefore be equal to every man. The principle of an *equality of rights* is clear and simple. Every man can understand it, and it is by understanding his rights that he learns his duties ; for where the rights of men are equal, every man must finally see the necessity of protecting the rights of others as the most effectual security for his own. But if in the formation of a constitution we depart from the principle of equal rights, or attempt any modification of it, we

plunge into a labyrinth of difficulties from which there is no way out but by retreating. Where are we to stop? Or by what principle are we to find out the point to stop at, that shall discriminate between men of the same country, part of whom shall be free, and the rest not? If property is to be made the criterion, it is a total departure from every moral principle of liberty, because it is attaching rights to mere matter, and making man the agent of that matter. It is, moreover, holding up property as an apple of discord, and not only exciting but justifying war against it; for I maintain the principle, that when property is used as an instrument to take away the rights of those who may happen not to possess property, it is used to an unlawful purpose, as fire-arms would be in a similar case.

In a state of nature all men are equal in rights, but they are not equal in power; the weak cannot protect themselves against the strong. This being the case, the institution of civil society is for the purpose of making an equalization of powers that shall be parallel to, and a guarantee of, the equality of rights. The laws of a country, when properly constructed, apply to this purpose. Every man takes the arm of the law for his protection as more effectual than his own; and, therefore, every man has an equal right in the formation of the government, and of the laws by which he is to be governed and judged. In extensive countries and societies, such as America and France, this right in the individual can only be exercised by delegation, that is, by election and representation; and hence it is that the institution of representative government arises.

Hitherto, I have confined myself to matters of principle only. *First*, that hereditary government has not a right to exist—that it cannot be established on any principle of right—and that it is a violation of all principle. *Secondly*, that government by election and

representation has its origin in the natural and eternal rights of man ; for whether a man be his own lawgiver, as he would be in a state of nature ; or whether he exercises his portion of legislative sovereignty in his own person, as might be the case in small democracies where all could assemble for the formation of the laws by which they were to be governed ; or whether he exercises it in the choice of persons to represent him in a national assembly of representatives, the origin of the right is the same in all cases. The first, as is before observed, is defective in power ; the second is practicable only in democracies of small extent ; the third is the greatest scale upon which human government can be instituted.

Next to matters of *principle*, are matters of *opinion*, and it is necessary to distinguish between the two. Whether the rights of men shall be equal is not a matter of opinion but of right, and consequently of principle ; for men do not hold their rights as grants from each other, but each one in right of himself. Society is the guardian, but not the giver. And, as in extensive societies, such as America and France, the right of the individual in matters of government cannot be exercised but by election and representation, it consequently follows that the only system of government, consistent with principle, where simple democracy is impracticable, is the representative system. But as to the organical part, or the manner in which the several parts of government shall be arranged and composed, it is altogether *matter of opinion.* It is necessary that all the parts be conformable with the *principle of equal rights ;* and so long as this principle be religiously adhered to, no very material error can take place, neither can any error continue long in that part that falls within the province of opinion.

In all matters of opinion, the social compact, or the principle by which society is held together, requires

that the majority of opinions becomes the rule for the whole, and that the minority yields practical obedience thereto. This is perfectly conformable to the principle of equal rights; for, in the first place, every man has a *right to give an opinion*, but no man has a right that his own should govern the rest. In the second place, it is not supposed to be known beforehand on which side of any question, whether for or against, any man's opinion will fall. He may happen to be in a majority upon some questions, and in a minority upon others; and by the same rule that he expects obedience in the one case, he must yield it in the other. All the disorders that have arisen in France, during the progress of the revolution, have had their origin, not in the *principle of equal rights*, but in the violation of that principle. The principle of equal rights has been repeatedly violated, and that not by the majority, but by the minority, and *that minority has been composed of men possessing property, as well as of men without property; property, therefore, even upon the experience already had, is no more a criterion of character than it is of rights.* It will sometimes happen that the minority are right, and the majority are wrong, but as soon as experience proves this to be the case, the minority will increase to a majority, and the error will reform itself by the tranquil operation of freedom of opinion and equality of rights. Nothing, therefore, can justify an insurrection, neither can it ever be necessary where rights are equal and opinions free.

Taking then the principle of equal rights as the foundation of the revolution, and consequently of the constitution, the organical part, or the manner in which the several parts of the government shall be arranged in the constitution, will, as is already said, fall within the province of opinion.

Various methods will present themselves upon a ques-

tion of this kind, and though experience is yet wanting to determine which is the best, it has, I think, sufficiently decided which is the worst. That is the worst, which in its deliberations and decisions is subject to the precipitancy and passion of an individual ; and when the whole legislature is crowded into one body, it is an individual in mass. In all cases of deliberation it is necessary to have a corps of reserve, and it would be better to divide the representation by lot into two parts, and let them revise and correct each other, than that the whole should sit together, and debate at once.

Representative government is not necessarily confined to any one particular form. The principle is the same in all the forms under which it can be arranged. The equal rights of the people is the root from which the whole springs, and the branches may be arranged as present opinion or future experience shall best direct. As to that *hospital of incurables* (as Chesterfield calls it), the British House of Peers, it is an excrescence growing out of corruption ; and there is no more affinity or resemblance between any of the branches of a legislative body originating from the right of the people, and the aforesaid House of Peers, than between a regular member of the human body and an ulcerated wen.

As to that part of government that is called the *executive*, it is necessary in the first place to fix a precise meaning to the word.

There are but two divisions into which power can be arranged. First, that of willing or decreeing the laws ; secondly, that of executing or putting them in practice. The former corresponds to the intellectual faculties of the human mind, which reasons and determines what shall be done ; the second, to the mechanical powers of the human body, that puts that determination into practice. If the former decides, and the latter does not perform, it is a state of imbecility ; and if the latter acts

without the predetermination of the former, it is a state of lunacy. The executive department is, therefore, official, and is subordinate to the legislative, as the body is to the mind in a state of health ; for it is impossible to conceive the idea of two sovereignties,—a sovereignty to *will* and a sovereignty to *act*. The executive is not invested with the power of deliberating whether it shall act or not ; it has no discretionary authority in the case ; for it can *act no other thing* than what the laws decree, and it is *obliged* to act conformably thereto ; and in this view of the case, the executive is made up of all the official departments that execute the laws, of which that which is called the judiciary is the chief.

But mankind have conceived an idea that *some kind of authority* is necessary to *superintend* the execution of the laws and to see that they are faithfully performed ; and it is by confounding this superintending authority with the official execution that we get embarrassed about the term *executive power*. — All the parts in the governments of the United States of America that are called THE EXECUTIVE, are no other than authorities to superintend the execution of the laws ; and they are so far independent of the legislative that they know the legislative only through the laws, and cannot be controlled or directed by it through any other medium.

In what manner this superintending authority shall be appointed or composed, is a matter that falls within the province of opinion. Some may prefer one method and some another ; and in all cases, where opinion only, and not principle is concerned, the majority of opinions forms the rule for all. There are, however, some things deducible from reason, and evidenced by experience, that serve to guide our decision upon the case. The one is, never to invest any individual with extraordinary power ; for besides his being tempted to misuse it, it will excite contention and commotion in the nation for

the office. Secondly, never to invest power long in the hands of any number of individuals. The inconveniences that may be supposed to accompany frequent changes are less to be feared than the dangers that arise from long continuance.

I shall conclude this discourse with offering some observations on the means of *preserving liberty;* for it is not only necessary that we establish it, but that we preserve it.

It is, in the first place, necessary that we distinguish between the means made use of to overthrow despotism, in order to prepare the way for the establishment of liberty, and the means to be used after despotism is overthrown.

The means made use of in the first case are justified by necessity. Those means are, in general, insurrections; for whilst the established government of despotism continues in any country, it is scarcely possible that any other means can be used. It is also certain that in the commencement of a revolution, the revolutionary party permit to themselves a *discretionary exercise of power* regulated more by circumstances than by principle, which, were the practice to continue, liberty would never be established, or if established, would soon be overthrown. It is never to be expected in a revolution, that every man is to change his opinion at the same moment. There never yet was any truth or any principle so irresistibly obvious, that all men believed it at once. Time and reason must co-operate with each other to the final establishment of any principle; and, therefore, those who may happen to be first convinced have not a right to persecute others, on whom conviction operates more slowly. The moral principle of revolutions is to instruct, not to destroy.

Had a constitution been established two years ago (as ought to have been done), the violences that have since

desolated France and injured the character of the revolution, would, in my opinion, have been prevented. The nation would then have had a bond of union, and every individual would have known the line of conduct he was to follow. But, instead of this, a revolutionary government, a thing without either principle or authority was substituted in its place; virtue and crime depended upon accident; and that which was patriotism one day, became treason the next. All these things have followed from the want of a constitution; for it is the nature and intention of a constitution to *prevent governing by party*, by establishing a common principle that shall limit and control the power and impulse of party, and that says to all parties, *Thus far shalt thou go and no further.* But in the absence of a constitution, men look entirely to party; and instead of principle governing party, party governs principle.

An avidity to punish is always dangerous to liberty. It leads men to stretch, to misinterpret and to misapply even the best of laws. He that would make his own liberty secure must guard even his enemy from oppression; for if he violates this duty, he establishes a precedent that will reach to himself.

THOMAS PAINE.

Paris, July, 1795.

LETTER TO MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS.

London, June 6, 1792.

SIR: As you opened the debate in the House of Commons, May 25th, on the proclamation for suppressing publications, which that proclamation (without naming any) calls wicked and seditious: and as you applied those opprobious epithets to the works entitled *Rights of Man*, I think it unnecessary to offer any other reason for addressing this letter to you.

I begin, then, at once by declaring, that I do not believe there are to be found in the writings of any author, ancient or modern, on the subject of government, a spirit of greater benignity and a stronger inculcation of moral principles, than in those which I have published. They come, sir, from a man who, by having lived in different countries and under different systems of government, and who, being intimate in the construction of them, is a better judge of the subject than it is possible that you, from the want of those opportunities, can be; and besides this, they come from a heart that knows not how to beguile.

I will further say, that when that moment arrives in which the best consolation that shall be left will be looking back on some past actions, more virtuous and more meritorious than the rest, I shall then with happiness remember, among other things, that I have written the *Rights of Man*. As to what proclamations, or prosecutions, or placemen or place expectants, those who possess or those who are gaping for office, may say

of them, it will not alter their character, either with the world or with me.

Having, sir, made this declaration, I shall proceed to remark, not particularly on your own speech on that occasion, but on any other speech to which your motion gave rise; and I shall begin with that of Mr. Adam.

This gentleman accuses me of not having done the very thing that I have done, and which, (he says,) if I had done, he should not have accused me.

In his speech, (see the *Morning Chronicle* of May 26), he says, "that he had well considered the subject of constitutional publications, and was by no means ready to say, (but the contrary,) that books of science upon government, though recommending a doctrine or system different from the form of our constitution, (meaning that of England,) were fit objects of prosecution; that if he did, he must condemn, (which he meant not to do,) Harrington for his *Oceana*, Sir Thomas More for his *Utopia*, and Hume for his *Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth*. But, (continued Mr. Adam,) the publication of Mr. Paine was very different, for it reviled what was most sacred in the constitution, destroyed every principle of subordination, and established nothing in their room."

I readily saw that Mr. Adam had not read the second part of the *Rights of Man;* and I am put under the necessity either of submitting to an erroneous charge, or of justifying myself against it; and I certainly shall prefer the latter. If, then, I shall prove to Mr. Adam, that in my reasoning upon systems of government in the second part of *Rights of Man*, I have shown, I think, as clearly as words can convey ideas, a certain system of government; and that not existing in theory only, but already in full and established practice, and systematically and practically free from all the vices and defects of the English government, and capable of producing more happiness to the people, and that also with an eightieth

part of the taxes which the present English system of government consumes ; I hope he will do me the justice when he next goes to the House, to get up and confess he had been mistaken in saying that I had established nothing, and that I had destroyed every principle of subordination. Having thus opened the case, I now come to the point.

In the second part of the *Rights of Man* I have distinguished government into two classes or systems : the hereditary and the representative systems.

In the first part of the *Rights of Man* I have shown, and it cannot be refuted, that there does not exist a right to establish hereditary government ; or in other words, hereditary governors ; because hereditary government always means a government yet to come, and the case always is, that the people who are to live afterwards have always the same right to choose a government for themselves, as the people had who lived before them.

In the second part of the *Rights of Man* I have not repeated those arguments, because they are irrefutable, but have confined myself to show the defects of hereditary government, or hereditary succession ; that it must, from the nature of it, throw government into the hands of men totally unworthy of it from want of principle, or unfitted for it from want of capacity. James II. is recorded as an instance of the first of these cases, and instances are to be found almost all over Europe to prove the truth of the latter.

To show the absurdity of the hereditary system still more strongly, I will now put the following case : Take any fifty men promiscuously, and it will be very extraordinary if, out of that number, more than one man should be found, whose principles and talents taken together (for some might have principles, and others have talents) would render him a person truly fitted to fill any very extraordinary office of national trust. If, then,

such a fitness of character could not be expected to be found in more than one person out of fifty, it would happen but once in a thousand years to the eldest son of any one family, admitting each, on an average, to hold the office twenty years. Mr. Adam talks of something in the constitution which he calls most sacred ; but I hope he does not mean hereditary succession, a thing which appears to me a violation of every order of nature and of common sense.

When I look into history and see the multitudes of men, otherwise virtuous, who have died, and whose families have been ruined, in defence of knaves and fools, and which they would not have done had they reasoned at all upon the system, I do not know a greater good that an individual can render to mankind, than to endeavor to break the chains of political superstition. Those chains are now dissolving fast, and proclamations and prosecutions will serve but to hasten that dissolution.

Having thus spoken of the hereditary system as a bad system, and subject to every possible defect, I now come to the representative system ; and this Mr. Adam will find stated in the second part of the *Rights of Man*, not only as the best, but as the only theory of government under which the liberties of a people can be permanently secure.

But it is needless now to talk of mere theory, since there is already a government in full practice, established upon that theory ; or, in other words, upon the rights of man, and has been so for almost twenty years. Mr. Pitt, in a speech of his some short time since, said, "That there never did, and never could exist a government established upon those rights, and that if it began at noon, it would end at night." Mr. Pitt has not yet arrived at the degree of a school boy in this species of knowledge. His practice has been confined to means of extorting revenue, and his boast has been — how much?

Whereas the boast of the system of government that I am speaking of, is not how much, but how little.

The system of government purely representative, unmixed with any thing of hereditary nonsense, began in America. I will now compare the effects of that system of government, with the system of government in England, both during and since the close of the war.

So powerful is the representative system; first, by combining and consolidating all the parts of a country together, however great the extent; and, secondly, by admitting of none but men properly qualified into the government, or dismissing them if they prove otherwise, that America was enabled thereby totally to defeat and overthrow all the schemes and projects of the hereditary government of England against her. As the establishment of the revolution and independence of America is a proof of this fact, it is needless to enlarge upon it.

I now come to the comparative effect of the two systems since the close of the war, and I request Mr. Adam to attend to it.

America had internally sustained the ravages of upwards of seven years of war, which England had not. England sustained only the expense of the war: whereas America sustained not only the expense, but the destruction of property committed by both armies. Not a house was built during that period, and many thousands were destroyed.

The farms and plantations along the coast of the country, for more than a thousand miles, were laid waste. Her commerce was annihilated. Her ships were either taken or had rotted within her own harbors. The credit of her funds had fallen upwards of ninety per cent., that is, an original hundred pounds would not sell for ten pounds. In short, she was apparently put back a hundred years when the war closed; which was not the case with England.

But such was the event, that the same representative system of government, though since better organized, which enabled her to conquer, enabled her also to recover, and she now presents a more flourishing condition, and a more happy and harmonized society under that system of government, than any country in the world can boast of under any other. Her towns are rebuilt much better than before; her farms and plantations are in higher improvement than ever; her commerce is spread over the world, and her funds have risen from less than ten pounds the hundred, to upwards of one hundred and twenty. Mr. Pitt and his colleagues talk of the things that have happened in his boyish administration, without knowing what greater things have happened elsewhere, and under other systems of government.

I next come to state the expense of the two systems, as they now stand in each of the countries; but it may first be proper to observe, that government in America is what it ought to be, a matter of honor and trust, and not made a trade of for the purpose of lucre.

The whole amount of net taxes in England (exclusive of the expense of collections, of drawbacks, of seizures and condemnations, of fines and penalties, of fees of office, of litigations and informers, which are some of the blessed means of enforcing them) is seventeen millions. Of this sum about nine millions go for the payment of the interest of the national debt, and the remainder, being about eight millions, is for the current annual expenses. Thus much for one side of the case. I now come to the other.

The expense of the several departments of the general representative government of the United States of America, extending over a space of country nearly ten times larger than England, is $294,558, which at 4*s.* 6*d.* per dollar, is £66,305 11*s.* sterling, and is thus apportioned:

Expense of the Executive Department.

The office of presidency, for which the president receives nothing for himself,	£ 5,625	0s.
Vice-president,	1,125	0
Chief-justice,	900	0
Five associate justices,	3,937	10
Nineteen judges of districts and the attorney-general,	6,873	15

Legislative Department.

Members of Congress at 6 dolls. (£1. 7s.) per day, their secretaries, clerks, chaplains, messengers, door-keepers, &c.,	25,515	0

Treasury Department.

Secretary, assistant, comptroller, auditor, treasurer, register and loan-office keeper in each state, together with all necessary clerks, office-keepers, &c.,	12,825	0

Department of State, including Foreign Affairs.

Secretary, clerks, &c.,	1,406	5

Department of War.

Secretary, clerks, paymasters, commissioners, &c.,	1,462	10

Commissioners for settling old accounts.

The whole board, clerks, &c.,	2,598	15

Incidental and contingent expenses.

For fire-wood, stationery, printing, &c.,	4,036	16
	£66,305	11s.

On account of the incursions of the Indians on the back settlements, Congress is obliged at this time to keep six thousand militia in pay, in addition to a regiment of foot, and a battalion of artillery, which it always keeps; and this increases the expense of the war department to 390,000 dollars, which is £87,795 sterling, but when peace shall be concluded with the Indians, the greatest part of this expense will cease, and the total amount of the expense of government, including that of the army, will not amount to £100,000 sterling, which, as has been already stated, is but an eightieth part of the expenses of the English government.

I request Mr. Adam and Mr. Dundas and all those who are talking of constitutions and blessings and kings and lords and the Lord knows what, to look at this statement. Here is a form and system of government,

that is better organized and better administered than any government in the world, and that for less than one hundred thousand pounds per annum, and yet every member of Congress receives, as a compensation for his time and attendance on public business, one pound seven shillings per day, which is at the rate of nearly five hundred pounds a year.

This is a government that has nothing to fear. It needs no proclamations to deter people from writing and reading. It needs no political superstition to support it. It was by encouraging discussion and rendering the press free upon all subjects of government, that the principles of government became understood in America, and the people are now enjoying the present blessings under it. You hear of no riots, tumults and disorders in that country; because there exists no cause to produce them. Those things are never the effect of freedom, but of restraint, oppression and excessive taxation.

In America, there is not that class of poor and wretched people that are so numerously dispersed all over England, who are to be told by a proclamation, that they are happy; and this is in a great measure to be accounted for, not by the difference of proclamations, but by the difference of governments and the difference of taxes between that country and this. What the laboring people of that country earn, they apply to their own use and to the education of their children, and do not pay it away in taxes as fast as they earn it, to support court extravagance and a long, enormous list of placemen and pensioners; and besides this, they have learned the manly doctrine of reverencing themselves, and consequently of respecting each other; and they laugh at those imaginary beings called kings and lords, and all the fraudulent trumpery of courts.

When placemen and pensioners, or those who expect to be such, are lavish in praise of a government, it is

not a sign of its being a good one. The pension-list alone in England (see Sir John Sinclair's *History of the Revenue*, p. 6, of the Appendix) is one hundred and seven thousand four hundred and four pounds, which is more than the expenses of the whole government of America amount to; and I am now more convinced than before, that the offer that was made to me of a thousand pounds for the copyright of the second part of the *Rights of Man*, together with the remaining copyright of the first part, was to have effected, by a quick suppression, what is now attempted to be done by a prosecution. The connection which the person who made that offer has with the King's printing-office may furnish part of the means of inquiring into this affair, when the ministry shall please to bring their prosecution to issue. But to return to my subject.

I have said in the second part of the *Rights of Man*, and I repeat it here, that the service of any man, whether called king, president, senator, legislator or any thing else, cannot be worth more to any country, in the regular routine of office, than ten thousand pounds per annum. We have a better man in America, and more of a gentleman, than any king I ever knew of, who does not occasion even half that expense; for though the salary is fixed at £5,625 he does not accept it, and it is only the incidental expenses that are paid out of it. The name by which a man is called is of itself but an empty thing. It is worth and character alone which can render him valuable, for without this, kings and lords and presidents are but jingling names.

But without troubling myself about constitutions of government, I have shown in the second part of the *Rights of Man*, that an alliance may be formed between England, France and America, and that the expenses of government in England may be put back to one million and a half, *viz.*—

Civil expense of government, - - -	£500,000
Army, - - - - - - - - -	500,000
Navy, - - - - - - - - -	500,000
	£1,500,000

And even this sum is fifteen times greater than the expenses of government are in America ; and it is also greater than the whole peace establishment of England amounted to about an hundred years ago. So much has the weight and oppression of taxes increased since the revolution, and especially since the year 1714.

To show that the sum of £500,000 is sufficient to defray all the civil expenses of government, I have in that work annexed the following estimate for any country of the same extent as England.

In the first place, three hundred representatives, fairly elected, are sufficient for all the purposes to which legislation can apply, and preferable to a larger number.

If then an allowance, at the rate of £500 per annum be made to every representative, deducting for non-attendance, the expense, if the whole number attended six months each year, would be - - - - - -	£ 75,000

The official departments could not possibly exceed the following number, with their salaries, viz.:

Three officers	at	£10,000 each, - - - - -	30,000
Ten ditto	at	5,000 " - - - - -	50,000
Twenty ditto	at	2,000 " - - - - - -	40,000
Forty ditto	at	1,000 " - - - - -	40,000
Two hundred ditto	at	500 " - - - - - -	100,000
Three hundred ditto	at	200 " - - - - -	60,000
Five hundred ditto	at	100 " - - - - - -	50,000
Seven hundred ditto	at	75 " - - - - -	52,500
			£497,500

If a nation chose, it might deduct four per cent. from all the offices, and make one of twenty thousand pounds per annum, and style the person who should fill it, king or majesty, or give him any other title.

Taking, however, this sum of one million and an half, as an abundant supply for all the expenses of government, under any form whatever, there will remain a surplus of nearly six millions and an half out of the

present taxes, after paying the interest of the national debt; and I have shown in the second part of the *Rights of Man* what appears to me the best mode of applying the surplus money; for I am now speaking of expenses and savings, and not of systems of government.

I have, in the first place, estimated the poor rates at two millions annually, and shown that the first effectual step would be to abolish the poor rates entirely (which would be a saving of two millions to the housekeepers), and to remit four millions out of the surplus taxes to the poor, to be paid to them in money in proportion to the number of children in each family, and the number of aged persons.

I have estimated the number of persons of both sexes in England of fifty years of age and upwards at 420,000, and have taken one-third of this number, *viz.*, 140,000, to be poor people.

To save long calculations, I have taken 70,000 of them to be fifty years of age, and under sixty; and the others to be sixty years and upwards; and to allow six pounds per annum to the former class, and ten pounds per annum to the latter. The expense of which will be,

Seventy thousand persons at £6 per annum,	£420,000
Seventy thousand persons at £10 per annum,	700,000
	£1,120,000

There will then remain of the four millions, two millions eight hundred and eighty thousand pounds. I have stated two different methods of appropriating this money. The one is to pay it in proportion to the number of children in each family, at the rate of three or four pounds per annum for each child; the other is to apportion it according to the expense of living in different counties; but in either of these cases it would, together with the allowance to be made to the aged, completely take off taxes from one-third of all the families in England, besides relieving all the other families from the burden of poor rates.

The whole number of families in England, allotting five souls to each family, is one million four hundred thousand, of which take one-third, *viz.*, 466,666, to be poor families, who now pay four million of taxes, and that the poorest pays at least four guineas a year; and that the other thirteen millions are paid by the other two-thirds. The plan, therefore, as stated in the work, is first to remit or pay, as is already stated, this sum of four millions to the poor, because it is impossible to separate them from the others in the present mode of collecting taxes on articles of consumption; and, secondly, to abolish the poor rates, the house and window-light tax, and to change the commutation tax into a progressive tax, on large estates, the particulars of all which are set forth in the work.

I will conclude this part of my letter with an extract from the second part of the *Rights of Man*, which Mr. Dundas (a man rolling in luxury at the expense of the nation) has branded with the epithet of "wicked."

"By the operation of this plan, the poor laws, those instruments of civil torture, will be superseded, and the wasteful expense of litigation prevented. The hearts of the humane will not be shocked by ragged and hungry children, and persons of seventy and eighty years of age begging for bread. The dying poor will not be dragged from place to place, to breathe their last, as a reprisal of parish upon parish. Widows will have a maintenance for their children, and not be carted away, on the death of their husbands, like culprits and criminals, and children will no longer be considered as increasing the distresses of their parents. The haunts of the wretched will be known, because it will be to their advantage, and the number of petty crimes, the offspring of poverty and distress, will be lessened. The poor as well as the rich will then be interested in the support of government, and the cause and apprehension of riots and

tumults will cease. Ye who sit it ease, and solace yourselves in plenty, and such there are in Turkey and Russia, as well as in England, and who say to yourselves, *Are we not well off?* have we thought of these things? when ye do, ye will cease to speak and feel for yourselves alone."—*Rights of Man*, part ii.

After this remission of four millions be made, and the poor rates and houses and window-light tax be abolished, and the commutation tax changed, there will still remain nearly one million and a half of surplus taxes; and as by an alliance between England, France and America, armies and navies will, in a great measure be rendered unnecessary, and as men who have either been brought up in, or long habitated to those lines of life, are still citizens of a nation in common with the rest, and have a right to participate in all plans of national benefit, it is proposed in that work (*Rights of Man*, part ii.) to apply annually £507,000 out of the surplus taxes to this purpose in the following manner:

To fifteen thousand disbanded soldiers, 3*s*. per week, clear of deductions, during life,	£117,000
Additional pay to the remaining soldiers per annum,	19,500
To the officers of the disbanded corps, during life, the sum of	117,000
To fifteen thousand disbanded sailors, 3*s*. per week during life,	117,000
Additional pay to the remaining sailors,	19,500
To the officers of the disbanded part of the navy, during life,	117,000
	£507,000

The limits to which it is proper to confine this letter will not admit of my entering into further particulars. I address it to Mr. Dundas because he took the lead in the debates, and he wishes, I suppose, to appear conspicuous; but the purport of it is to justify myself from the charge which Mr. Adam has made.

This gentleman, as has been observed in the beginning of this letter, considers the writings of Harrington, More and Hume as justifiable and legal publications, because

they reasoned by comparison, though in so doing they showed plans and systems of government, not only different from, but preferable to that of England, and he accuses me of endeavoring to confuse, instead of producing a system in the room of that which I had reasoned by comparison of the representative system against the hereditary system ; but I have gone further ; for I have produced an instance of a government established entirely on the representative system, under which greater happiness is enjoyed, much fewer taxes required, and much higher credit is established, than under the system of government in England. The funds in England have arisen since the war only from £54 to £97, and they have been down since the proclamation to £87, whereas the funds in America rose in the meantime from £10 to £120.

His charge against me of "destroying every principle of subordination," is equally as groundless ; which even a single paragraph from the work will prove, and which I shall here quote :

"Formerly, when divisions arose respecting government, recourse was had to the sword, and a civil war ensued. That savage custom is exploded by the new system, and recourse is had to a national convention. Discussion and the general will arbitrates the question, and to this private opinion yields with a good grace, and order is preserved uninterrupted."--*Rights of Man*, part ii.

That two different charges should be brought at the same time, the one by a member of the legislature for not doing a certain thing, and the other by the attorney-general for doing it, is a strange jumble of contradiction. I have now justified myself, or the work rather, against the first, by stating the case in this letter, and the justification of the other will be undertaken in its proper place. But in any case the work will go on.

I shall now conclude this letter with saying, that the

only objection I found against the plan and principles contained in the second part of the *Rights of Man* when I had written the book, was that they would beneficially interest at least ninety-nine persons out of every hundred throughout the nation, and therefore would not leave sufficient room for men to act from the direct and disinterested principles of honor; but the prosecution now commenced has fortunately removed that objection, and the approvers and protectors of that work now feel the immediate impulse of honor, added to that of national interest.

I am, Mr. Dundas,

Not your obedient humble servant,

But to the contrary,

THOMAS PAINE.

LETTER TO MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS.

SECOND LETTER.

Calais, Sept. 15, 1792.

SIR: I conceive it necessary to make you acquainted with the following circumstance:—The department of Calais having elected me a member of the National Convention of France, I set off from London the 13th instant, in company with Mr. Frost, of Spring Garden, and Mr. Audibert, one of the municipal officers of Calais, who brought me the certificate of my being elected. We had not arrived more, I believe, than five minutes at the York Hotel, at Dover, when the train of circumstances began that I am going to relate. We had taken our baggage out of the carriage, and put it into a room, into which we went. Mr. Frost, having occasion to go out, was stopped in the passage by a gentleman, who told him he must return into the room, which he did, and the gentleman came in with him, and shut the door; I had remained in the room. Mr. Audibert was gone to inquire when the packet was to sail. The gentleman then said that he was collector of the customs, and had an information against us, and must examine our baggage for prohibited articles. He produced his commission as collector. Mr. Frost demanded to see the information, which the collector refused to show, and continued to refuse on every demand that we made. The collector then called in several other officers, and began first to search our pockets. He took from Mr. Audibert, who was then returned into the room, every

thing he found in his pocket, and laid it on the table. He then searched Mr. Frost in the same manner (who, among other things, had the keys of the trunks in his pocket), and then did the same by me. Mr. Frost, wanting to go out, mentioned it, and was going towards the door; on which the collector placed himself against the door, and said nobody should depart from the room. After the keys had been taken from Mr. Frost (for I had given him the keys of my trunks beforehand, for the purpose of his attending the baggage to the customs, if it should be necessary), the collector asked us to open the trunks, presenting us the keys for that purpose; this we declined to do, unless he would produce his information, which he again refused. The collector then opened the trunks himself, and took out every paper and letter, sealed or unsealed. On our remonstrating with him on the bad policy, as well as the illegality of custom-house officers seizing papers and letters, which were things that did not come under their cognizance, he replied, that the *proclamation* gave him the authority.

Among the letters which he took out of my trunk were two sealed letters, given into my charge by the American minister in London, one of which was directed to the American minister at Paris, the other to a private gentleman; a letter from the President of the United States, and a letter from the Secretary of State in America, both directed to me, and which I had received from the American minister, now in London, and were private letters of friendship; a letter from the electoral body of the department of Calais, containing the notification of my being elected to the National Convention; and a letter from the President of the National Assembly, informing me of my being also elected for the department of the Oise.

As we found that all remonstrances with the collector, on the bad policy and illegality of seizing papers and

letters, and retaining our persons by force, under the pretence of searching for prohibited articles, were vain (for he justified himself on the proclamation and on the information which he refused to show), we contented ourselves with assuring him, that what he was then doing, he would afterwards have to answer for, and left it to himself to do as he pleased.

It appeared to us that the collector was acting under the direction of some other person or persons, then in the hotel, but whom he did not choose we should see, or who did not choose to be seen by us ; for the collector went several times out of the room for a few minutes, and was also called out several times.

When the collector had taken what papers and letters he pleased out of the trunks, he proceeded to read them. The first letter he took up for this purpose was that from the President of the United States to me. While he was doing this, I said, that it was very extraordinary that General Washington could not write a letter of private friendship to me, without its being subject to be read by a custom-house officer. Upon this Mr. Frost laid his hand over the face of the letter, and told the collector that he should not read it, and took it from him. Mr. Frost then, casting his eyes on the concluding paragraph of the letter, said, I will read this part to you, which he did ; of which the following is an exact transcript — "And as no one can see a greater interest in the happiness of mankind than I do, it is the first wish of my heart, that the enlightened policy of the present age may diffuse to all men those blessings to which they are entitled, and lay the foundation of happiness to future generations."

As all the other letters and papers lay then on the table, the collector took them up, and was going out of the room with them. During the transactions already stated, I contented myself with observing what passed,

and spoke but little ; but on seeing the collector going out of the room with the letters, I told him that the papers and letters then in his hand were either belonging to me, or entrusted to my charge, and that as I could not permit them to be out of my sight, I must insist on going with him.

The collector then made a list of the letters and papers, and went out of the room, giving the letters and papers into the charge of one of the officers. He returned in a short time, and, after some trifling conversation, chiefly about the proclamation, told us, that he saw *the proclamation was ill-founded*, and asked if we chose to put the letters and papers into the trunks ourselves, which, as we had not taken them out, we declined doing, and he did it himself, and returned us the keys.

In stating to you these matters, I make no complaint against the personal conduct of the collector, or of any of the officers. Their manner was as civil as such an extraordinary piece of business could admit of.

My chief motive in writing to you on this subject is that you may take the measures for preventing the like in future, not only as it concerns private individuals, but in order to prevent a renewal of those unpleasant consequences that have heretofore arisen between nations from circumstances equally as insignificant. I mention this only for myself ; but as the interruption extended to two other gentleman, it is probable that they, as individuals, will take some more effectual mode for redress.

I am, sir, yours, &c.,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. Among the papers seized was a copy of the attorney-general's information against me for publishing the *Rights of Man*, and a printed proof copy of my *Letter to the Addressers*, which will soon be published.

Speech in the French National Convention,

as delivered July 7, 1795.

ON the motion of Lanthenas, "That permission be granted to Thomas Paine to deliver his sentiments on the declaration of rights and the constitution," Thomas Paine ascended the tribune; and no opposition being made to the motion, one of the secretaries, who stood by Mr. Paine, read his speech, of which the following is a literal translation:

Citizens: The effects of a malignant fever, with which I was afflicted during a rigorous confinement in the Luxembourg, have thus long prevented me from attending at my post in the bosom of the convention, and the magnitude of the subject under discussion, and no other consideration on earth, could induce me now to repair to my station.

A recurrence to the vicissitudes I have experienced, and the critical situations in which I have been placed in consequence of the French revolution, will throw upon what I now propose to submit to the convention, the most unequivocal proofs of my integrity, and the rectitude of those principles which have uniformly influenced my conduct.

In England I was proscribed for having vindicated the French revolution, and I have suffered a rigorous imprisonment in France for having pursued a similar mode of conduct. During the reign of terrorism, I was a close prisoner for eight long months, and remained so above three months after the era of the 10th Thermidor.

I ought, however, to state, that I was not persecuted by the *people* either of England or France. The proceedings in both countries were the effects of the despotism existing in their respective governments. But, even if my persecution had originated in the people at large, my principles and conduct would still have remained the same. Principles which are influenced and subject to the control of tyranny have not their foundation in the heart.

A few days ago, I transmitted to you by the ordinary mode of distribution, a short treatise, entitled *Dissertations on the First Principles of Government.* This little work I did intend to have dedicated to the people of Holland, who, about the time I began to write it, were determined to accomplish a revolution in their government, rather than to the people of France, who had long before effected that glorious object. But there are, in the constitution which is about to be ratified by the convention, certain articles, and in the report which preceded it, certain points, so repugnant to reason and incompatible with the true principles of liberty, as to render this treatise, drawn up for another purpose, applicable to the present occasion, and under this impression I presumed to submit it to your consideration.

If there be faults in the constitution, it were better to expunge them now, than to abide the event of their mischievous tendency; for certain it is, that the plan of the constitution which has been presented to you is not consistent with the grand object of the revolution, nor congenial to the sentiments of the individuals who accomplished it.

To deprive half the people in a nation of their rights as citizens is an easy matter in theory or on paper, but it is a most dangerous experiment, and rarely practicable in the execution.

I shall now proceed to the observations I have to offer

on this important subject ; and I pledge myself that they shall be neither numerous nor diffusive.

In my apprehension, a constitution embraces two distinct parts or objects, the *principle* and the *practice ;* and it is not only an essential, but an indispensable provision, that the practice should emanate from and accord with the principle. Now I maintain that the converse of this proposition is the case in the plan of the constitution under discussion. The first article, for instance, of the *political state* of citizens (v. Title ii. of the Constitution), says :

"Every man born and resident in France, who, being twenty-one years of age, has inscribed his name on the civic register of his canton, and who has lived afterwards one year on the territory of the republic, and who pays any direct contribution whatsoever, real or personal, is a French citizen."

I might here ask, if those only who come under the above description are to be considered as citizens, what designation do you mean to give the rest of the people ? I allude to that portion of the people on whom the principal part of the labor falls, and on whom the weight of indirect taxation will in the event chiefly press. In the structure of the social fabric, this class of people are infinitely superior to that privileged order, whose only qualification is their wealth or territorial possessions. For what is trade without merchants? What is land without cultivation? And what is the produce of the land without manufactures? But to return to the subject.

In the first place, this article is incompatible with the three first articles of the declaration of rights, which precede the constitutional act.

The first article of the declaration of rights says :

"The end of society is the public good ; and the institution of government is to secure to every individual the enjoyment of his rights."

But the article of the constitution to which I have just adverted proposes as the object of society, not the public good, or in other words, the good of *all*, but a partial good, or the good only of a *few;* and the constitution provides solely for the rights of this few, to the exclusion of the many.

The second article of the declaration of rights says:

"The rights of man in society are liberty, equality and security of his person and property."

But the article alluded to in the constitution has a direct tendency to establish the converse of this position, inasmuch as the persons excluded by this *inequality* can neither be said to possess liberty, nor security against oppression. They are consigned totally to the caprice and tyranny of the rest.

The third article of the declaration of rights says:

"Liberty consists in such acts of volition as are not injurious to others."

But the article of the constitution on which I have observed, breaks down this barrier. It enables the liberty of one part of society to destroy the freedom of the other.

Having thus pointed out the inconsistency of this article to the declaration of rights, I shall proceed to comment on that part of the same article which makes a direct contribution a necessary qualification to the right of citizenship.

A modern refinement on the object of public revenue has divided the taxes or contributions into two classes, the *direct* and the *indirect*, without being able to define precisely the distinction or difference between them, because the effect of both is the same.

Those are designated indirect taxes which fall upon the consumers of certain articles, on which the tax is imposed, because the tax being included in the price, the consumer pays it without taking notice of it.

The same observation is applicable to the territorial tax. The land proprietors, in order to reimburse themselves, will rack-rent their tenants; the farmer, of course, will transfer the obligation to the miller, by enhancing the price of grain; the miller to the baker, by increasing the price of flour; and the baker to the consumer, by raising the price of bread. The territorial tax, therefore, though called *direct*, is, in its consequences, *indirect*.

To this tax the land proprietor contributes only in proportion to the quantity of bread and other provisions that are consumed in his own family. The deficit is furnished by the great mass of the community, which comprehends every individual of the nation.

From the logical distinction between the direct and indirect taxation, some emolument may result, I allow, to auditors of public accounts, &c., but to the people at large I deny that such a distinction (which, by the way, is without a difference) can be productive of any practical benefit. It ought not, therefore, to be admitted as a principle in the constitution.

Besides this objection, the provision in question does not affect to define, secure or establish the right of citizenship. It consigns to the caprice or discretion of the legislature the power of pronouncing who shall or shall not exercise the functions of a citizen; and this may be done effectually, either by the imposition of a *direct* or *indirect* tax, according to the selfish views of the legislators, or by the mode of collecting the taxes so imposed.

Neither a tenant who occupies an extensive farm, nor a merchant or manufacturer, who may have embarked a large capital in their respective pursuits, can ever, according to this system, attain the preemption of a citizen. On the other hand, any upstart, who has, by succession or management, got possession of a few acres of lands, or a miserable tenement, may exultingly exercise the

functions of a citizen, although perhaps he neither possesses a hundredth part of the worth or property of a simple mechanic, nor contributes in any proportion to the exigencies of the state.

The contempt in which the old government held mercantile pursuits, and the obloquy that attached on merchants and manufacturers, contributed not a little to its embarrassments and its eventual subversion; and, strange to tell, though the mischiefs arising from this mode of conduct are so obvious, yet an article is proposed for your adoption which has a manifest tendency to restore a defect inherent in the monarchy.

I shall now proceed to the second article of the same title, with which I shall conclude my remarks.

The second article says, "Every French soldier, who shall have served one or more campaigns in the cause of liberty, is deemed a citizen of the republic, without any respect or reference to other qualifications."

It should seem, that in this article the committee were desirous of extricating themselves from a dilemma into which they had been plunged by the preceding article. When men depart from an established principle, they are compelled to resort to trick and subterfuge, always shifting their means to preserve the unity of their objects; and as it rarely happens that the first expedient makes amends for the prostitution of principle, they must call in aid a second of a more flagrant nature to supply the deficiency of the former. In this manner legislators go on accumulating error upon error, and artifice upon artifice, until the mass becomes so bulky and incongruous, and their embarrassment so desperate, that they are compelled, as their last expedient, to resort to the very principle they had violated. The committee were precisely in this predicament when they framed this article; and to me, I confess, their conduct appears specious rather than efficacious.

It was not for himself alone, but for his family, that the French citizen, at the dawn of the revolution (for then indeed every man was considered a citizen), marched soldier-like to the frontiers, and repelled a foreign invasion. He had it not in his contemplation, that he should enjoy liberty for the residue of his earthly career, and by his own act preclude his offspring from that inestimable blessing. No! He wished to leave it as an inheritance to his children, and that they also might hand it down to their latest posterity. If a Frenchman, who united in his person the character of a soldier and a citizen, was now to return from the army to his peaceful habitation, he must address his family in this manner:

"Sorry I am, that I cannot leave to you a small portion of what I have acquired by exposing my person to the ferocity of our enemies, and defeating their machinations. I have helped to establish the republic, and, painful the reflection, all the laurels which I have won in the field are blasted, and all the privileges to which my exertions have entitled me, extend not beyond the period of my own existence!" Thus the measure that has been adopted by way of subterfuge falls short of what the framers of it speculated upon; for in conciliating the affections of the *soldier*, they have subjected the *father* to the most pungent sensations, by obliging him to adopt a generation of slaves.

Citizens, a great deal has been urged respecting insurrections. I am confident that no man has a greater abhorrence of them than myself, and I am sorry that any insinuations should have been thrown out against me, as a promoter of violence of any kind. The whole tenor of my life and conversation gives the lie to those calumnies, and proves me to be a friend to order, truth and justice.

I hope you will attribute this effusion of my senti-

ments to my anxiety for the honor and success of the revolution. I have no interest distinct from that which has a tendency to meliorate the condition of mankind. The revolution, as far as it respects myself, has been productive of more loss and persecution than it is possible for me to describe, or for you to indemnify. But with respect to the subject under consideration, I could not refrain from declaring my sentiments.

In my opinion, if you subvert the basis of the revolution, if you dispense with principles and substitute expedients, you will extinguish that enthusiasm and energy which have hitherto been the life and soul of the revolution ; and you will substitute in its place nothing but a cold indifference and self-interest, which will again degenerate into intrigue, cunning and effeminacy.

But to discard all considerations of a personal and subordinate nature, it is essential to the well-being of the republic, that the practical or organic part of the constitution should correspond with its principles ; and as this does not appear to be the case in the plan that has been presented to you, it is absolutely necessary that it should be submitted to the revision of a committee, who should be instructed to compare it with the declaration of rights, in order to ascertain the difference between the two, and to make such alterations as shall render them perfectly consistent and compatible with each other.

Reasons for Sparing the Life of Louis Capet

as delivered to the National Convention.

Citizen President: My hatred and abhorrence of monarchy are sufficiently known; they originate in principles of reason and conviction, nor, except with life, can they ever be extirpated; but my compassion for the unfortunate, whether friend or enemy, is equally lively and sincere.

I voted that Louis should be tried, because it was necessary to afford proofs to the world of the perfidy, corruption and abomination of the monarchical system. The infinity of evidence that has been produced exposes them in the most glaring and hideous colors; thence it results, that monarchy, whatever form it may assume, arbitrary or otherwise, becomes necessarily a centre, round which are united every species of corruption, and the kingly trade is no less destructive of all morality in the human breast than the trade of an executioner is destructive of its sensibility.

I remember, during my residence in another country, that I was exceedingly struck with a sentence of M. Autheine, at the Jacobins, which corresponds exactly with my own idea—"Make me a king to-day," said he, "and I shall be a robber to-morrow."

Nevertheless, I am inclined to believe that if Louis Capet had been born in an amiable and respectable neighborhood, at liberty to practice the duties of domestic life, had he been thus situated, I cannot believe that he

would have shown himself destitute of social virtues: we are, in a moment of fermentation like this, naturally little indulgent to his vices, or rather to those of monarchical governments; we regard them with additional horror and indignation; not that they are more heinous than those of his predecessors, but because our eyes are now open, and the veil of delusion is at length withdrawn; yet the lamentable, degraded state to which he is actually reduced is surely far less imputable to him, than to the constituent assembly, which, of its own authority, without consent or advice of the people, restored him to the throne.

I was in Paris at the time of the flight or abdication of Louis XVI., and when he was taken and brought back. The proposal of restoring him to supreme power struck me with amazement; and although at that time I was not a French citizen, yet as a citizen of the world, I employed all the efforts that depended on me to prevent it.

A small society, composed only of five persons, two of whom are now members of the convention, took at that time the name of the Republican Club (societe republicaine). This society opposed the restoration of Louis, not so much on account of his personal offences, as in order to overthrow the monarchy, and to erect on its ruins the republican system and an equal representation.

With this design, I traced out in the English language certain propositions, which were translated with some trifling alterations, and signed by Achilles Duchatlet, actually lieutenant-general in the army of the French republic, and at that time one of the five members which composed our little party; the law requiring the signature of a citizen at the bottom of each printed paper.

The paper was indignantly torn by Malouet; and brought forth in this very room as an article of accusation against the person who had signed it, the author

and their adherents, but such is the revolution of events, that this paper is now received and brought forth for a very opposite purpose : to remind the nation of the errors of that unfortunate day, that fatal error of not having then banished Louis XVI. from its bosom, and not to plead this day in favor of his exile, preferably to his death.

The paper in question was conceived in the following terms :

"Brethren and fellow citizens: The serene tranquility, the mutual confidence which prevailed amongst us, during the time of the late king's escape, the indifference with which we beheld him return, are unequivocal proofs that the absence of a king is more desirable than his presence, and that he is not only a political superfluity, but a grievous burden, pressing hard on the whole nation.

"Let us not be imposed upon by sophisms ; all that concerns this, is reduced to four points.

"He has abdicated the throne in having fled from his post. Abdication and desertion are not characterized by the length of absence ; but by the single act of flight. In the present instance, the act is every thing, and the time nothing.

"The nation can never give back its confidence to a man who, false to his trust, perjured to his oath, conspires a clandestine flight, obtains a fraudulent passport, conceals a king of France under the disguise of a valet, directs his course towards a frontier covered with traitors and deserters, and evidently meditates a return into our country, with a force capable of imposing his own despotic laws.

"Whether ought his flight to be considered as his own act, or the act of those who fled with him? Was it a spontaneous resolution of his own, or was it inspired into him by others? The alternative is immaterial :

whether fool or hypocrite, idiot or traitor, he has proved himself equally unworthy of the important functions that had been delegated to him.

"In every sense that the question can be considered, the reciprocal obligation which subsisted between us is dissolved. He holds no longer any authority. We owe him no longer obedience. We see in him no more than an indifferent person; we can regard him only as Louis Capet.

"The history of France presents little else than a long series of public calamity, which takes its source from the vices of the kings: we have been the wretched victims that have never ceased to suffer either for them or by them. The catalogue of their oppressions was complete, but to complete the sum of their crimes, treason yet was wanting. Now the only vacancy is filled up, the dreadful list is full; the system is exhausted: there are no remaining errors for them to commit, their reign is consequently at an end.

"What kind of office must that be in a government which requires neither experience nor ability to execute? That may be abandoned to the desperate chance of birth, that may be filled with an idiot, a madman, a tyrant, with equal effect as by the good, the virtuous and the wise? An office of this nature is a mere nonentity: it is a place of show, not of use. Let France, then, arrived at the age of reason, no longer be deluded by the sound of words, and let her deliberately examine, if a king, however insignificant and contemptible in himself, may not at the same time be extremely dangerous.

"The thirty millions which it costs to support a king in the eclat of stupid brutal luxury presents us with an easy method of reducing taxes, which reduction would at once release the people, and stop the progress of political corruption. The grandeur of nations consists, not, as kings pretend, in the splendor of thrones, but in a

conspicuous sense of their own dignity, and in a just disdain of those barbarous follies and crimes, which, under the sanction of royalty, have hitherto desolated Europe.

"As to the personal safety of Louis Capet, it is so much the more confirmed, as France will not stoop to degrade herself by a spirit of revenge against a wretch who has dishonored himself. In defending a just and glorious cause, it is not possible to degrade it, and the universal tranquility which prevails, is an undeniable proof that a free people know how to respect themselves."

Having thus explained the principles and the exertions of the republicans at that fatal period, when Louis was reinstated in full possession of the executive power, which by his flight had been suspended, I return to the subject, and to the deplorable situation in which the man is now actually involved.

What was neglected at the time of which I have been speaking, has been since brought about by the force of necessity; the willful, treacherous defects in the former constitution have been brought to light; the continual alarm of treason and conspiracy roused the nation, and produced eventually a second revolution. The people have beat down royalty, never, never to rise again; they have brought Louis Capet to the bar and demonstrated in the face of the whole world, the intrigues, the cabals, the falsehood, corruption and rooted depravity, the inevitable effects of monarchical governments. There remains then only one question to be considered, what is to be done with this man?

For myself, I seriously confess that when I reflect on the unaccountable folly that restored the executive power to his hands, all covered as he was with perjury and treason, I am far more ready to condemn the constituent assembly than the unfortunate prisoner Louis Capet.

But abstracted from every other consideration, there is one circumstance in his life which ought to cover, or at least to palliate a great number of his transgressions, and this very circumstance affords to the French nation a blessed occasion of extricating itself from the yoke of kings, without defiling itself in the impurities of their blood.

It is to France alone, I know, that the United States of America owe that support which enabled them to shake off the unjust and tyrannical yoke of Britain. The ardor and zeal which she displayed to provide both men and money, were the natural consequences of a thirst for liberty. But as the nation at that time, restrained by the shackles of her own government, could only act by the means of a monarchical organ, this organ—whatever in other respects the object might be, certainly performed a good, a great action. Let then these United States be the safeguard and asylum of Louis Capet. There, hereafter, far removed from the miseries and crimes of royalty, he may learn, from the constant aspect of public prosperity, that the true system of government consists not in kings, but in fair, equal, and honorable representation.

In relating this circumstance, and in submitting this proposition, I consider myself as a citizen of both countries. I submit it as a citizen of America, who feels the debt of gratitude which he owes to every Frenchman. I submit it also as a man, who, although the enemy of kings, cannot forget that they are subject to human frailties.

I support my proposition as a citizen of the French republic, because it appears to me the best and most politic measure that can be adopted.

As far as my experience in public life extends, I have ever observed, that the great mass of the people are invariably just, both in their intentions and their object;

but the true method of accomplishing that effect, does not always show itself in the first instance.

For example; the English nation had groaned under the despotism of the Stuarts. Hence Charles I. lost his life; yet Charles II. was restored to all the plentitude of power, which his father had lost.

Forty years afterward the same family strove to re-establish their ancient oppressions; so the nation then banished from its territories the whole race. The remedy was effectual. The Stuart family sunk into obscurity, crowded itself with the multitude, and is at length extinct.

The French nation, more enlightened than England was at that time, has carried her measures of government to a greater length. France is not satisfied with exposing the guilt of the monarch, she has penetrated into the views and horrors of the monarchy. She has shown them clear as daylight, and forever crushed that infernal system; and he, whoever he may be, that should ever dare to reclaim those rights, would be regarded not as a pretender, but punished as a traitor.

Two brothers of Louis Capet have banished themselves from the country; but they are obliged to bear with the spirit and etiquette of the courts where they reside. They can advance no pretensions on their own account, so long as Louis Capet shall live.

Monarchy, in France, was a system pregnant with crimes and murders; cancelling all natural ties, even those by which brothers are united. We know how often they have assassinated each other to pave a way to power. As those hopes which the emigrants had reposed in Louis XVI. are fled, the last which remains rests upon his death, and their situation inclines them to desire this catastrophe, that they may once again rally round a more active chief, and try one further effort under the fortune of the ci-devant monsieur and d'Artois.

That such an enterprise would precipitate them into a new abyss of calamity and disgrace, it is not difficult to foresee; but yet it might be attended with mutual loss, and it is our duty as legislators, not to spill a drop of blood when our purpose may be effectually accomplished without it.

It has already been proposed to abolish the punishment of death: and it is with infinite satisfaction, that I recollect the humane and excellent oration pronounced by Robespierre, on that subject, in the constituent assembly. This cause must find its advocate in every land, where enlightened politicians and lovers of humanity exist; and it ought above all to find them in this assembly.

Monarchical governments have trained the human race and inured it to the sanguinary arts and refinements of punishments; and it is exactly the same punishment, which has so long shocked the sight and tormented the patience of the people, that now in their turn, they practice in revenge upon their oppressors. But it becomes us to be strictly on our guard against the abomination and perversity of monarchical examples: as France has been the first of European nations to abolish royalty, let her also be the first to abolish the punishment of death, and to find out a milder and more effectual substitute.

In the particular case now under consideration, I submit the following propositions: 1st, that the national convention shall pronounce sentence of banishment on Louis and his family. 2d, That Louis Capet shall be detained in prison till the end of the war; and at that epoch the sentence of banishment to be executed.

LETTER TO THE PEOPLE OF FRANCE.

Paris, Sept. 25, 1793, (first year of the Republic.)

FELLOW CITIZENS—I receive with affectionate gratitude, the honor which the late National Assembly has conferred upon me, by adopting me a citizen of France; and the additional honor of being elected by my fellow citizens a member of the National Convention. Happily impressed, as I am, by these testimonies of respect shown towards me as an individual, I feel my felicity increased by seeing the barrier broken down that divided patriotism by spots of earth, and limited citizenship to the soil, like vegetation.

Had those honors been conferred in an hour of national tranquillity, they would have afforded no other means of showing my affection, than to have accepted and enjoyed them; but they come accompanied with circumstances that give me the honorable opportunity of commencing my citizenship in the stormy hour of difficulties. I come not to enjoy repose. Convinced that the cause of France is the cause of all mankind, and that as liberty cannot be purchased by a wish, I gladly share with you the dangers and honors necessary to success.

I am well aware that the moment of any great change, such as that accomplished on the 10th of August, is unavoidably the moment of terror and confusion. The mind, highly agitated by hope, suspicion, and apprehension, continues without rest till the change be accomplished. But let us now look calmly and confidently

forward, and success is certain. It is no longer the paltry cause of kings, or of this or that individual, that calls France and her armies into action. It is the great cause of ALL. It is the establishment of a new era, that shall blot despotism from the earth, and fix, on the lasting principles of peace and citizenship, the great republic of man.

It has been my fate to have borne a share in the commencement and complete establishment of one revolution, (I mean the revolution of America.) The success and events of that revolution are encouraging to us. The prosperity and happiness that have since flowed to that country, have amply rewarded her for all the hardships she endured, and for all the dangers she encountered.

The principles on which that revolution began have extended themselves to Europe; and an over-ruling Providence is regenerating the old world by the principles of the new. The distance of America from all the other parts of the globe, did not admit of her carrying those principles beyond her own boundaries. It is the peculiar honor of France, that she now raises the standard of liberty for all nations; and in fighting her own battles, contends for the rights of all mankind.

The same spirit of fortitude that insured success to America, will insure it to France; for it is impossible to conquer a nation determined to be free! The military circumstances that now unite themselves to France, are such as the despots of the earth know nothing of, and can form no calculation upon. They know not what it is to fight against a nation. They have only been accustomed to make war upon each other, and they know from system and practice, how to calculate the probable success of despot against despot; and here their knowledge and experience end.

But in a contest like the present a new and boundless

variety of circumstances arise, that derange all such customary calculations. When a whole nation acts as an army, the despot knows not the extent of the power against which he contends. New armies arise against him with the necessity of the moment. It is then that the difficulties of an invading enemy multiply, as in the former case they diminished ; and he finds them at their height when he expected them to end.

The only war that has any similarity of circumstances with the present, is the late revolutionary war in America. On her part, as it now is in France, it was a war of the whole nation. There it was that the enemy, by beginning to conquer, put himself in a condition of being conquered. His first victories prepared him for defeat. He advanced until he could not retreat, and found himself among a nation of armies.

Were it now to be proposed to the Austrians and Prussians, to escort them into the middle of France, and there leave them to make the most of such a situation, they would see too much into the dangers of it to accept the offer, and the same dangers would attend them could they arrive there by any other means. Where then is the military policy of their attempting to obtain by force, that which they would refuse by choice. But to reason with despots is throwing reason away. The best of arguments is a vigorous preparation.

Man is ever a stranger to the ways by which Providence regulates the order of things. The interference of foreign despots may serve to introduce into their own enslaved countries the principles that they come to oppose. Liberty and equality are blessings too great to be the inheritance of France alone. It is an honor to her to be their first champion ; and she may now say to her enemies, with a mighty voice, "O! Ye Austrians, ye Prussians! Ye who now turn your bayonets against us,

it is for all Europe ; it is for all mankind, and not for France alone, that she raises the standard of liberty and equality!"

The public cause has hitherto suffered from the contradictions contained in the constitution of the constituent assembly. Those contradictions have served to divide the opinions of individuals at home, and to obscure the great principles of the revolution in other countries. But when those contradictions shall be removed, and the constitution made conformable to the declaration of rights ; when the bagatelles of monarchy, royalty, regency ; and hereditary succession shall be exposed, with all their absurdities, a new ray of light will be thrown over the world, and the revolution will derive new strength by being universally understood.

The scene that now opens itself to France extends far beyond the boundaries of her own dominions. Every nation is becoming her colleague, and every court is become her enemy. It is now the cause of all nations against the cause of all courts. The terror that despotism felt, clandestinely begot a confederation of despots ; and their attack upon France was produced by their fears at home.

In entering on this great scene, greater than any nation has been called to act in, let us say to the agitated mind, be calm. Let us punish by instructing, rather than by revenge. Let us begin the new era by a greatness of friendship, and hail the approach of union and success.

Your fellow citizen,

THOMAS PAINE.

ON THE PROPRIETY OF BRINGING LOUIS XVI. TO TRIAL.

Paris, Nov. 20, 1792.

CITIZEN PRESIDENT.—As I do not know precisely what day the Convention will resume the discussion on the trial of Louis XVI., and, on account of my inability to express myself in French, I cannot speak at the tribune, I request permission to deposit in your hands the enclosed paper, which contains my opinion on that subject. I adopt this step with so much more eagerness, because circumstance will prove to what a degree it interests France, that Louis XVI. should continue to enjoy good health. I should be happy if the Convention would have the goodness to hear this paper read this morning, as I propose sending a copy of it to London to be printed in the English journals.

A Secretary read the opinion of Thomas Paine.

I think that Louis XVI. ought to be tried; not that this advice is suggested by a spirit of vengeance, but because this measure appears to me just, lawful, and conformable to sound policy. If Louis XVI. is innocent, let us put him to prove his innocence; if he is guilty, let the national will determine if he should be pardoned or punished; but besides the motives which personally interest Louis XVI., there are others which make his trial necessary. I am about to develop these motives,

in the language which suits them, and no other. I forbid myself the use of equivocal expressions or of mere ceremony. There was formed among the crowned ruffians of Europe a conspiracy, which threatened not only French liberty, but likewise that of all nations. Every thing tends to make it be believed, that Louis XVI. was the partner of that horde of conspirators. You have this man in your power, and he is at present the only one of the band of whom we can make sure. I consider Louis XVI. in the same point of view as the two first robbers taken up in the affair of the jewel office, — their trial enabled you to discover the gang to which they belonged. We have seen the unhappy soldiers of Austria and Prussia, and the other powers which declared themselves our enemies, torn from their firesides, and drawn to carnage as the vilest of animals, to sustain, at the price of their blood, the common cause of crowned robbers. They loaded the inhabitants of those regions with taxes to support the expenses of the war. All this was not done solely for Louis XVI. Some of the conspirators have acted openly: but there is reason to presume that this conspiracy is composed of two classes of robbers; those who have taken up arms, and those who have lent to their cause secret encouragement and clandestine assistance: and it is indispensable to let France and all Europe know all these accomplices.

A little time after the National Convention was constituted, the minister for foreign affairs presented the picture of all the governments of Europe, as well as those whose hostilities were public, as of those who acted with a mysterious circumspection. We have already penetrated into some part of the conduct of Mr. Guelph, Elector of Hanover, and violent presumptions affect the same man, his court and ministers, in quality of king of England.

M. Calonne has constantly been favored with a friendly reception at that court. The arrival of Mr. Smith, secretary to Mr. Pitt, at Coblentz, when the emigrants were assembling there; the recall of the English ambassador; the extravagant joy manifested by the court of St. James' at the false report of the defeat of Dumourier, when it caused it to be communicated by Lord Elgin, then minister of Great Britain at Brussels—all these circumstances render him extremely suspicious; the trial of Louis XVI. will probably furnish more decisive proofs.

The long subsisting fear of a revolution in England, could, I believe, singly, prevent that court from manifesting as much publicity in its operation as Austria and Prussia. Another reason could be added to this; the consequential decrease of credit, by means of which alone all the ancient governments could obtain fresh loans; for in proportion as the probability of a revolution increased, whoever should furnish towards the new loans must expect to lose his stock.

Everybody knows that the Landgrave of Hesse fights only as far as he is paid; he has been for several years in the pay of the court of London. If the trial of Louis XVI. could bring it to light, that this detestable dealer in human flesh has been paid out of the produce of the taxes levied on the people of England, it would be but doing justice to that nation to inform them of that fact; it would at the same time give to France an exact knowledge of the character of that court, which has not ceased to be the most intriguing, ever since its connection with Germany.

Louis XVI., considered as an individual, is an object beneath the notice of the republic; but when he is looked upon as a part of that band of conspirators, as a criminal whose trial may lead all the nations in the world to a knowledge and detestation of that disastrous

system of monarchy, and the plots and intrigues of their own courts, he ought to be, and must be tried.

If the crimes for which Louis XVI. is arraigned, were absolutely personal to him, without reference to general conspiracies, and confined to the affairs of France, the motives of inviolability, that folly of the moment, might have been urged in his behalf with some appearance of reason ; but as he is arraigned not only on the part of France, but for having conspired against all Europe, we ought to use every means in our power to discover the whole extent of that conspiracy. France is now a republic : she has completed her revolution ; but she cannot earn all the advantages arising from it, as long as she is environed with despotical governments ; their armies and marines oblige her likewise to keep troops and ships in readiness. It is, therefore, her immediate interest that all nations be as free as herself ; that revolutions be universal ; and since Louis XVI. can serve to prove, by the flagitiousness of government in general, the necessity of revolutions, she ought not to let slip so precious an opportunity.

The despots of Europe have formed alliances to preserve their respective authority, and to perpetuate the oppression of nations ; this is the end which they proposed to themselves in making an invasion on the French territory. They dread the effect of the French revolution in the bosom of their own countries ; and in hopes of preventing it, they are come to try to destroy that revolution, before it should have attained its perfect maturity. Their attempt has not been attended with success: France has already vanquished their armies ; but it is left to her to sound the particulars of the conspiracy, to discover, to expose to the eyes of the universe, those despots who had the infamy to take part in it ; and the universe expects of her that act of justice.

These are my motives for demanding that Louis XVI. be judged ; and it is in this sole point of view, that this trial appears to me of sufficient importance to attract the attention of the republic.

As to what regards inviolability, I would not have such a motive to be mentioned. Seeing no longer in Louis XVI. but a weak-minded and narrow-spirited individual, ill-bred, like all his colleagues, given, as it is said, to frequent excesses of drunkenness, and whom the National Assembly raised again imprudently on a throne which was not made for him, if we show him hereafter some pity, it shall not be the result of the burlesque idea of a pretended inviolability.

THOMAS PAINE.

SPEECH IN THE NATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE QUESTION, "SHALL OR SHALL NOT A RESPITE OF THE SENTENCE OF LOUIS XVI. TAKE PLACE?"

I HAVE voted for the detention of Louis, and his banishment after the war, but I am much afraid that the speedy execution of the sentence of Louis will rather pass for a deed of vengeance than a measure of justice. I wish the Convention had voted as the nation would; I mean for imprisonment.

The United States of America had the utmost veneration for Louis, who gave them liberty. And I can pledge myself to you, that the sentence of Louis will overwhelm all the Americans with consternation. And remember, that it is they who will alone supply you with all the timber and naval stores you shall want in the maritime war you are about to declare. The north of Europe is ready to bring its forces against you. You mean to send an ambassador to Philadelphia; my sincere wish is, that he may announce to the Americans that the National Convention of France, from pure friendship to America, has consented to respite the sentence of Louis.

Citizens, let not a neighboring despot enjoy the satisfaction of seeing that man mount the scaffold who has broke the irons of the Americans.

TO THE PEOPLE OF FRANCE, AND TO THE FRENCH ARMIES.

WHEN an extraordinary measure, not warranted by established constitutional rules, and justifiable only on the supreme law of absolute necessity, bursts suddenly upon us, we must, in order to form a true judgment thereon, carry our researches back to the times that preceded and occasioned it. Taking then the subject up, with respect to the event of the eighteenth of Fructidor on this ground, I go to examine the state of things prior to that period. I begin with the establishment of the constitution of the year three of the French Republic.

A better *organized* constitution has never yet been devised by human wisdom. It is, in its organization, free from all the vices and defects to which other forms of government are more or less subject. I will speak first of the legislative body, because the legislature is, in the natural order of things, the first power; the executive is the first magistrate.

By arranging the legislative body into two divisions, as is done in the French constitution, the one, (the council of five hundred), whose part it is to conceive and propose laws; the other, a council of ancients, to review, approve, or reject the laws proposed; all the security is given that can arise from coolness of reflection acting upon, or correcting the precipitancy or enthusi-

asm of conception and imagination. It is seldom that our first thought, even upon any subject, is sufficiently just.

The policy of renewing the legislature by a third part each year, though not entirely new, either in theory or in practice, is, nevertheless, one of the modern improvements in the science of government. It prevents, on the one hand, that convulsion and precipitate change of measures, into which a nation might be surprised by the going out of the whole legislature at the same time, and the instantaneous election of a new one. On the other hand, it excludes that common interest from taking place, that might tempt a whole legislature, whose term of duration expired at once, to usurp the right of continuance. I go now to speak of the executive.

It is a principle uncontrovertible by reason, that each of the parts by which government is composed, should be so constructed as to be in perpetual maturity. We should laugh at the idea of a council of five hundred, or a council of ancients, or a parliament, or any national assembly, who should be all children in leading strings and in the cradle, or be all sick, insane, deaf, dumb, lame or blind at the same time ; or be all upon crutches, tottering with age or infirmities. Any form of government that was so constructed, as to admit the possibility of such cases happening to a whole legislature, would justly be the ridicule of the whole world ; and on a parity of reasoning, it is equally as ridiculous that the same cases should happen in that part of government which is called the executive ; yet this is the contemptible condition to which an executive is always subject, and which is often happening, when it is placed in an hereditary individual called a king. When that individual is in either of the cases before mentioned, the whole executive is in the same case ; for himself is the whole. He is then, (as an executive,) the ridiculous picture of

what a legislature would be, if all its members were in the same case. The one is a whole made up of parts, the other, a whole without parts ; and anything happening to the one, (as a part or section of the government,) is parallel to the same thing happening to the other.

As therefore, an hereditary executive called a king is a perfect absurdity in itself, any attachment to it is equally as absurd. It is neither instinct or reason ; and if this attachment is what is called royalism in France, then is a royalist inferior in character to every species of the animal world ; for what can that thing be, who acts neither by instinct nor reason? Such a being merits rather our derision than our pity ; and it is only when it assumes to act its folly, that it becomes capable of provoking republican indignation. In every other case it is too contemptible to excite anger. For my own part, when I contemplate the self-evident absurdity of the thing, I can scarcely permit myself to believe that there exists in the high-minded nation of France, such a mean and silly animal as a royalist.

As it required but a single glance of thought to see, (as is before said,) that all the parts of which government is composed, must be at all times in a state of full maturity, it was not possible that men acting under the influence of reason, could, in forming a constitution, admit an hereditary executive, any more than an hereditary legislature. I go, therefore, to examine the other cases.

In the first place, (rejecting the hereditary system,) shall the executive by election, be an *individual*, or a *plurality*.

An individual by election is almost as bad as the hereditary system, except that there is always a better chance of not having an idiot. But he will never be any thing more than a chief of a party, and none but

those of that party will have access to him. He will have no person to consult with of a standing equal with himself, and consequently be deprived of the advantages arising from equal discussion. Those whom he admits in consultation, will be ministers of his own appointment, who, if they displease by their advice, must expect to be dismissed. The authority, also, is too great, and the business too complicated to be intrusted to the ambition or the judgment of an individual; and, besides these cases, the sudden change of measures that might follow by the going out of an individual executive and the election of a new one, would hold the affairs of a nation in a state of perpetual uncertainty. We come then to the case of a plural executive.

It must be sufficiently plural to give opportunity to discuss all the various subjects that in the course of national business may come before it; and yet not so numerous as to endanger the secrecy that certain cases, such as those of war, require.

Establishing, then, plurality as a principle, the only question is, What shall be the number of that plurality?

Three are too few either for the variety or the quantity of business. The constitution has adopted *five;* and experience has shown, from the commencement of the constitution to the time of the election of the new legislative third, that this number of directors, when well chosen, is sufficient for all national executive purposes; and, therefore, a great number would be only an unnecessary expense. That the measures of the directory, during that period, were well concerted, is proved by their success; and their being well concerted, shows they were discussed; and, therefore, that *five* is a sufficient number with respect to discussion; and, on the other hand, the secret, whenever there was one, (as in the case of the expedition to Ireland), was well kept,

and, therefore, the number is not too great to endanger the necessary secrecy.

The reason why the two councils are numerous is not from the necessity of their being so, on account of business, but because that every part of the republic shall find and feel itself in the national representation.

Next to the general principle of government by representation, the excellence of the French constitution consists in providing means to prevent that abuse of power that might arise by letting it remain too long in the same hands. This wise precaution pervades every part of the constitution. Not only the legislature is renewable by a third every year, but the president of each of the councils is renewable every month; and of the directory, one member each year, and its president every three months. Those who formed the constitution cannot be accused of having contrived for themselves. The constitution, in this respect, is as impartially constructed as if those who framed it were to die as soon as they had finished their work.

The only defect in the constitution is that of having narrowed the right of election; and it is, in a great measure, to this narrowing the right, that the last elections have not generally been good. My ancient colleagues will, I presume, pardon my saying this to-day, when they recollect my arguments against this defect at the time the constitution was discussed in the Convention.

I will close this part of the subject by remarking on one of the most vulgar and absurd *sayings* or dogmas that ever yet imposed itself upon the world, which is, "*that a republic is fit only for a small country, and a monarchy for a large one.*" Ask those who say this, their reasons why it is so, and they can give none.

Let us then examine the case.—If the quantity of knowledge in a government ought to be proportioned to

the extent of a country, and the magnitude and variety of its affairs, it follows, as an undeniable result, that this absurd dogma is false, and that the reverse of it is true. As to what is called monarchy, if it be adaptable to any country, it can only be so to a small one, whose concerns are few, little complicated, and all within the comprehension of an individual. But when we come to a country of large extent, vast population, and whose affairs are great, numerous, and various, it is the representative republican system only, that can collect into the government the quantity of knowledge necessary to govern to the best national advantage. Montesquieu, who was strongly inclined to republican government, sheltered himself under this absurd dogma; for he had always the Bastile before his eyes when he was speaking of republics, and therefore *pretended* not to write for France. Condorcet governed himself by the same caution, but it was caution only, for no sooner had he the opportunity of speaking fully out than he did it. When I say this of Condorcet, I know it as a fact. In a paper published in Paris, July, 1792, entitled, "*The Republican, or the Defender of Representative Government*," is a piece signed *Thomas Paine*. That piece was concerted between Condorcet and myself. I wrote the original in English, and Condorcet translated it. The object of it was to expose the absurdity and falsehood of the above mentioned dogma.

Having thus concisely glanced at the excellencies of the constitution, and the superiority of the representative system of government over every other system, (if any other can be called a system), I come to speak of the circumstances that have intervened between the time the constitution was established, and the event that took place on the 18th of Fructidor of the present year.

Almost as suddenly as the morning light dissipates

darkness, did the establishment of the constitution change the face of affairs in France. Security succeeded to terror, prosperity to distress, plenty to famine, and confidence increased as the days multiplied, until the coming of the new third. A series of victories, unequalled in the world, followed each other, almost too rapidly to be counted, and too numerous to be remembered. The coalition, every where defeated and confounded, crumbled away like a ball of dust in the hand of a giant. Every thing, during that period, was acted on such a mighty scale, that reality appeared a dream, and truth outstript romance. It may figuratively be said, that the Rhine and the Rubicon (Germany and Italy) replied in triumphs to each other, and the echoing Alps prolonged the shout. I will not here dishonor a great description by noticing too much the English government. It is sufficient paradoxically to say, that in the magnitude of its littleness, it cringed, it intrigued, and sought protection in corruption.

Though the achievements of these days might give trophies to a nation and laurels to its heroes, they derive their full radiance of glory from the principle they inspired and the object they accomplished. Desolation, chains, and slavery had marked the progress of former wars ; but to conquer for liberty had never been thought of. To receive the degrading submission of a distressed and subjugated people, and insultingly permit them to live, made the chief triumph of former conquerors ; but to receive them with fraternity, to break their chains, to tell them they are free, and teach them to be so, make a new volume in the history of man.

Amidst those national honors, and when only two enemies remained, both of whom had solicited peace, and one of them had signed preliminaries, the election of the new third commenced. Every thing was made easy to them. All difficulties had been conquered be-

fore they arrived at the government. They came in the olive days of the revolution, and all they had to do was not to do mischief.

It was, however, not difficult to foresee, that the elections would not be generally good. The horrid days of Robespierre were still remembered, and the gratitude due to those who had put an end to them was forgotten.

Thousands who, by passive approbation during that tremendous scene, had experienced no suffering, assumed the merit of being the loudest against it. Their cowardice in not opposing it, became courage when it was over. They exclaimed against terrorism, as if they had been the heroes that overthrew it, and rendered themselves ridiculous by fantastically overacting moderation. The most noisy of this class that I have met with, are those who suffered nothing. They became all things, at all times, to all men ; till at last they laughed at principle. It was the real republicans who suffered most during the time of Robespierre. The persecution began upon them on the 31st of May, and ceased only by the exertions of the remnant that survived.

In such a confused state of things as preceded the late elections, the public mind was put into a condition of being easily deceived ; and it was almost natural that the hypocrite would stand the best chance of being elected into the new third. Had those who, since their election, have thrown the public affairs into such confusion by counter revolutionary measures, declared themselves beforehand, they would have been denounced instead of being chosen. Deception was necessary to their success. The constitution obtained a full establishment ; the revolution was considered as complete ; and the war on the eve of termination. In such a situation, the mass of the people, fatigued by a long revolution, sought repose ; and in their elections they looked out for quiet men. They unfortunately found hypo-

crites. Would any of the primary assemblies have voted for civil war? Certainly they would not. But the electoral assemblies of some departments have chosen men, whose measures, since their election, tended to no other end but to provoke it. Either those electors have deceived their constituents of the primary assemblies, or they have been themselves deceived in the choice they made of deputies.

That there were some direct but secret conspirators in the new third, can scarcely admit of a doubt ; but it is most reasonable to suppose, that a great part was seduced by the vanity of thinking they could do better than those had done whom they succeeded. Instead of trusting to experience, they attempted experiments. This counter-disposition prepared them to fall in with any measures contrary to former measures ; and that without seeing, and probably without suspecting, the end to which they led.

No sooner were the members of the new third arrived at the seat of government, than expectation was excited to see how they would act. Their motions were watched by all parties ; and it was impossible for them to steal a march unobserved. They had it in their power to do great good, or great mischief. A firm and manly conduct on their part, uniting with that of the directory and their colleagues, would have terminated the war. But the moment before them was not the moment of hesitation. He that hesitates in such situation is lost.

The first public act of the Council of Five Hundred was the election of Pichegru to the presidency of that council. He arrived at it by a very large majority, and the public voice was in his favor. I, among the rest, was one who rejoiced at it. But if the defection of Pichegru was at that time known to Conde, and consequently to Pitt, it unveils the cause that retarded all

negotiations for peace. They interpreted that election into a signal of a counter-revolution, and were waiting for it ; and they mistook the respect shown to Pichegru, founded on the supposition of his integrity, as a sympton of national revolt. Judging of things by their own foolish ideas of government, they ascribed appearances to causes between which there was no connection. Every thing on their part had been a comedy of errors, and the actors have been chased from the stage.

Two or three decades of the new sessions passed away without any thing very material taking place ; but matters soon began to explain themselves. The first thing that struck the public mind was, that no more was heard of negotiations for peace, and that public business stood still. It was not the object of the conspirators there should be peace ; but as it was necessary to conceal that object, the constitution was ransacked to find pretences for delay. In vain did the directory expose to them the state of the finances and the wants of the army. The committee, charged with that business, trifled away its time by a series of unproductive reports, and continued to sit only to produce more. Every thing necessary to be done was neglected, and every thing improper was attempted. Pichegru occupied himself about forming a national guard for the councils ; the suspicious signal of war. Camille Jordan, about priests and bells, and the emigrants, with whom he had associated during the two years he was in England. Willot and Delarue attacked the directory ; their object was to displace some one of the directors, to get in another of their own. Their motives with respect to the age of Barras (who is as old as he wishes to be, and has been a little too old for them) were too obvious not to be seen through.

In this suspensive state of things, the public mind, filled with apprehensions, became agitated, and without

knowing what it might be, looked for some extraordinary event. It saw, for it could not avoid seeing, that things could not remain long in the state they were in ; but it dreaded a convulsion. That spirit of triflingness which it had indulged too freely when in a state of security, and which it is probable the new agents had interpreted into indifference about the success of the republic, assumed a serious aspect that afforded to conspiracy no hope of aid ; but still it went on. It plunged itself into new measures with the same ill success, and the further it went, the further the public mind retired. The conspiracy saw nothing around it to give it encouragement.

The obstinacy, however, with which it persevered in its repeated attacks upon the directory, in framing laws in favor of emigrants and refractory priests, and in every thing inconsistent with the immediate safety of the republic, and which served to encourage the enemy to prolong the war, admitted of no other direct interpretation than that something was rotten in the council of Five Hundred. The evidence of circumstances became every day too visible not to be seen, and too strong to be explained away. Even as errors, (to say no worse of them,) they are not entitled to apology ; for where knowledge is a duty, ignorance is a crime.

The more serious republicans, who had better opportunities than the generality had, of knowing the state of politics, began to take the alarm, and formed themselves into a society, by the name of the constitutional circle. It is the only society of which I have been a member in France ; and I went to this because it was become necessary that the friends of the republic should rally round the standard of the constitution. I met there several of the original patriots of the revolution ; I do not mean of the last order of Jacobins, but of the first of that name. The faction in the council of Five Hundred, who, find-

ing no council from the public, began to be frightened at appearances, fortified itself against the dread of this society, by passing a law to dissolve it. The constitutionality of the law was at least doubtful : but the society, that it might not give the example of exasperating matters already too much inflamed, suspended its meetings.

A matter, however, of much greater moment soon after presented itself. It was the march of four regiments ; some of whom, in the line of their route, had to pass within about twelve leagues of Paris, which is the boundary the constitution had fixed as the distance of the armed force from the legislative body. In another state of things, such a circumstance would not have been noticed. But conspiracy is quick of suspicion ; and the fear which the faction in the council of Five Hundred manifested upon this occasion, could not have suggested itself to innocent men ; neither would innocent men have expostulated with the directory upon the case in the manner these men did. The question they urged went to extort from the directory, and to make known to the enemy, what the destination of the troops was. The leaders of the faction conceived that the troops were marching against them ; and the conduct they adopted in consequence of it, was sufficient to justify the measure, even if it had been so. From what other motive than the consciousness of their own designs, could they have fear? The troops, in every instance, had been the gallant defenders of the republic, and the openly declared friends of the constitution ; the directory had been the same, and if the faction were not of a different description, neither fear nor suspicion could have had place among them.

All those manœuvres in the council were acted under the most professional attachment to the constitution ; and this as necessarily served to enfeeble their projects. It is exceedingly difficult, and next to impossible, to

conduct a conspiracy, and still more so to give it success, in a popular government. The disguised and feigned pretences which men in such cases are obliged to act in the face of the public, suppress the action of the faculties, and give even to natural courage the features of timidity. They are not half the men they would be, where no disguise is necessary. It is impossible to be a hypocrite, and to be brave at the same instant.

The faction, by the imprudence of its measures, upon the march of the troops, and upon the declarations of the officers and soldiers to support the republic, and the constitution against all open or concealed attempts to overturn them, had gotten itself involved with the army, and in effect declared itself a party against it. On the one hand, laws were proposed to admit emigrants and refractory priests as free citizens; and on the other hand to exclude the militaries from Paris, and to punish the soldiers who had declared to support the republic. In the mean time all negotiations for peace went backward; and the enemy still recruiting its forces, rested to take advantage of circumstances. Excepting the cessation of hostilities, it was a state worse than war.

If all this was not a conspiracy, it had at least the features of one, and was pregnant with the same mischiefs. The eyes of the faction could not avoid being open to the dangers to which it obstinately exposed the republic; yet still it persisted. During this scene, the journals devoted to the faction, were repeatedly announcing the near approach of peace with Austria and with England, and often asserting it was concluded. This falsehood could be intended for no other purpose, than to keep the eyes of the people shut against the dangers to which they were exposed.

Taking all circumstances together, it was impossible that such a state of things could continue long; and at

length it was resolved to bring it to an issue. There is good reason to believe that the affair of the 18th Fructidor (Sept. 4) was intended to have had place two days before ; but on recollecting that it was the 2d of September, a day mournful in the annals of the revolution, it was postponed. When the issue arrived, the faction found to its cost, it had no party among the public. It had sought its own disasters, and was left to suffer the consequences. Foreign enemies, as well as those of the interior, if any such there be, ought to see in the event of this day, that all expectation of aid from any part of the public, in support of a counter revolution, is delusion. In a state of security the thoughtless, who trembled at terror, may laugh at principles of liberty (for they have laughed) but it is one thing to indulge a foolish laugh ; it is quite another thing to surrender liberty.

Considering the event of the 18th Fructidor in a political light, it is one of those that is justifiable only on the supreme law of absolute necessity, and it is the necessity abstracted from the event that is to be deplored. The event itself is matter of joy. Whether the manœuvres in the council of Five Hundred were the conspiracy of a few, aided by the perverseness of many, or whether it had a deeper root, the dangers were the same. It was impossible to go on. Every thing was at stake, and all national business at a stand. The case reduced itself to a simple alternative—shall the republic be destroyed by the darksome manœuvres of a faction, or shall it be preserved by an extraneous act?

During the American revolution, and that after the state constitutions were established, particular cases arose that rendered it necessary to act in a manner that would have been treasonable in a state of peace. At one time congress invested General Washington with dictatorial power. At another time the government of Pennsyl-

vania suspended itself and declared martial law. It was the necessity of the times only that made the apology of those extraneous measures. But who was it that produced the necessity of an extraneous measure in France? A faction, and that in the face of prosperity and success. Its conduct is without apology ; and it is on the faction only that the extraneous measure has fallen. The public has suffered no inconvenience. If there are some men more disposed than others not to act severely, I have a right to place myself in that class ; the whole of my political life invariably proves it : yet I can not see, taking all parts of the case together, what else, or what better, could have been done, than has been done. It was a great stroke, applied in a great crisis, that crushed in an instant, and without the loss of a life, all the hopes of the enemy, and restored tranquillity to the interior.

The event was ushered in by the discharge of two cannon at four in the morning, and was the only noise that was heard throughout the day. It naturally excited a movement among the Parisians to enquire the cause. They soon learned it, and the countenance they carried was easy to be interpreted. It was that of a people who, for some time past, had been oppressed with apprehensions of some direful event, and who felt themselves suddenly relieved by finding what it was. Every one went about his business, or followed his curiosity in quietude. It resembled the cheerful tranquillity of the day when Louis XVI. absconded in 1791, and like that day it served to open the eyes of the nation.

If we take a review of the various events, as well conspiracies as commotions, that have succeeded each other in this revolution, we shall see how the former have wasted consumptively away, and the consequences of the latter have softened. The 31st of May and its consequences were terrible. That of the 9th and 10th

Thermidor, though glorious for the republic, as it overthrew one of the most horrid and cruel despotisms that ever raged, was nevertheless marked with many circumstances of severe and continued retaliation. The commotions of Germinal and Prairial of the year three, and of Vendemaire of the year four, were many degrees below those that preceded them, and affected but a small part of the public. This of Pichegru and his associates has been crushed in an instant, without the stain of blood, and without involving the public in the least inconvenience.

These events taken in a series, mark the progress of the republic from disorder to stability. The contrary of this is the case in all parts of the British dominions. There, commotions are on an ascending scale; every one is higher than the former. That of the sailors had nearly been the overthrow of the government. But the most potent of all is the invisible commotion in the bank. It works with the silence of time, and the certainty of death. Every thing happening in France is curable; but this is beyond the reach of nature or invention.

Leaving the event of the 18th Fructidor to justify itself by the necessity that occasioned it, and glorify itself by the happiness of its consequences, I come to cast a coup-d'œil on the present state of affairs.

We have seen by the lingering condition of the negotiations for peace, that nothing was to be expected from them, in the situation that things stood prior to the 18th Fructidor. The armies had done wonders, but those wonders were rendered unproductive by the wretched manœuvres of a faction. New exertions are now necessary to repair the mischiefs which that faction has done. The electoral bodies, in some departments, who by an injudicious choice, or a corrupt influence, have sent improper deputies to the legislature, have some

atonement to make to their country. The evil originated with them, and the least they can do is to be among the foremost to repair it.

It is, however, vain to lament an evil that is past. There is neither manhood nor policy in grief; and it often happens that an error in politics, like an error in war, admits of being turned to greater advantage than if it had not occurred. The enemy, encouraged by that error, presumes too much, and becomes doubly foiled by the re-action. England, unable to conquer, has stooped to corrupt; and defeated in the last, as in the first, she is in a worse condition than before. Continually increasing her crimes, she increases the measure of her atonement, and multiplies the sacrifices she must make to obtain peace. Nothing but the most obstinate stupidity could have induced her to let slip the opportunity when it was within her reach. In addition to the prospect of new expenses, she is now, to use Mr. Pitt's own figurative expression against France, *not only on the brink, but in the gulf of bankruptcy.* There is no longer any mystery in paper money. Call it assignats, mandats, exchequer bills, or bank notes, it is still the same. Time has solved the problem, and experience has fixed its fate.

The government of that unfortunate country discovers its faithlessness so much, that peace, on any terms with her, is scarcely worth obtaining. Of what use is peace with a government that will employ that peace for no other purpose than to repair, as far as it is possible, her shattered finances and broken credit, and then to war again? Four times within less than ten years, from the time the American war closed, has the Anglo-germanic government of England been meditating fresh war. First with France, on account of Holland, in 1787; afterwards with Russia; then with Spain, on account of Nootka Sound; and a second time against

France, to overthrow her revolution. Sometimes that government employs Prussia against Austria; at another time Austria against Prussia; and always one or the other, or both, against France. Peace with such a government is only a treacherous cessation of hostilities.

The frequency of wars on the part of England, within the last century, more than before, must have had some cause that did not exist prior to that epoch. It is not difficult to discover what that cause is. It is the mischievous compound of an elector of the Germanic body and a king of England; and which necessarily must, at some day or other, become an object of attention to France. That one nation has not a right to interfere in the *internal* government of another nation, is admitted; and in this point of view, France has no right to dictate to England what its form of government shall be. If it choose to have a thing called a king, or whether that king shall be a man or an ass, is a matter with which France has no business. But whether an elector of the Germanic body shall be king of England, is an *external* case, and with which France and every other nation, who suffers inconvenience and injury in consequence of it, has a right to interfere.

It is from this mischievous compound of elector and king, that originates a great part of the troubles that vex the continent of Europe; and with respect to England, it has been the cause of her immense national debt, the ruin of her finances, and the insolvency of her bank. All intrigues on the continent, in which England is a party, or becomes involved, are generated by, and act through the medium of this Anglo-germanic compound. It will be necessary to dissolve it. Let the elector retire to his electorate, and the world will have peace.

England has, herself, given examples of interference

in matters of this kind, and that in cases where injury was only apprehended. She engaged in a long and expensive war against France (called the succession war) to prevent a grandson of Louis the fourteenth being king of Spain; because, said she, *it will be injurious to me;* and she has been fighting and intriguing against what was called the family-compact ever since. In 1787 she threatened France with war to prevent a connection between France and Holland; and in all her propositions of peace to-day she is dictating separations. But if she look at the Anglo-germanic compact at home, called the Hanover succession, she cannot avoid seeing, that France necessarily must, some day or other, take up that subject, and make the return of the elector to his electorate one of the conditions of peace. There will be no lasting peace between the two countries till this be done, and the sooner it be done, the better will it be for both.

I have not been in any company where this matter has been a topic, that did not see it in the light it is here stated. Even Barthelemy, when he first came to the directory (and Barthelemy was never famous for patriotism) acknowledged in my hearing, and in company with Derche, secretary to the legation at Lille, the connection of an elector of Germany and the king of England was injurious to France. I do not, however, mention it from a wish to embarrass the negotiations for peace. The directory has fixed its *ultimatum;* but if that ultimatum be rejected, the obligation to adhere to it is discharged, and a new one may be assumed. So wretchedly has Pitt managed his opportunities, that every succeeding negotiation has ended in terms more against him than the former.* If the directory had

* The father of Pitt, when a member of the house of commons, exclaiming one day, during a former war, against the enormous and ruinous expense of German connections, as the offspring of the Hanover succession, and borrowing a metaphor from the story of Prometheus, cried out: "*Thus, like Prometheus, is Britain chained to the barren rock of Hanover, whilst the imperial eagle preys upon her vitals.*"

bribed him he could not serve its interest better than he does. He serves it as Lord North served that of America, which finished in the discharge of his master.

Thus far I had written when the negotiations at Lille became suspended, in consequence of which, I delayed the publication, that the ideas suggested in this letter might not intrude themselves during the interval. The ultimatum offered by the directory, as the terms of peace, was more moderate than the government of England had a right to expect. That government, though the provoker of the war, was the first that committed hostilities by sending away the ambassador Chauvelin,* had formerly talked of demanding from France, *indemnification for the past and security for the future.* France, in her turn, might have retorted and demanded the same from England ; but she did not. As it was England that, in consequence of her bankruptcy, solicited peace, France offered it to her on the simple condition of her restoring the islands she had taken. The ultimatum has been rejected, and the negotiations broken off. The spirited part of France will say, *tant mieux*, so much the better.

How the people of England feel, on the breaking up of the negotiation, which was entirely the act of their own government, is best known to themselves ; but from what I know of the two nations, France ought to hold herself perfectly indifferent about a peace with the government of England. Every day adds new strength to France and new embarrassments to her enemy. The

*It was stipulated in the treaty of commerce between France and England, concluded at Paris, that the sending away an ambassador by either party, should be taken as an act of hostility by the other party. The declaration of war (Feb., 1793) by the Convention, of which I was then a member, and know well the case, was made in exact conformity to this article in the treaty ; for it was not a declaration of war against England, but a declaration that the French republic is *in* war with England ; the first act of hostility having been committed by England. The declaration was made immediately on Chauvelin's return to France, and in consequence of it. Mr. Pitt should inform himself of things better than he does, before he prates so much about them, or of the sending away of Malmesbury, who was only on a visit of permission.

resources of the one increase, as those of the other become exhausted. England is now reduced to the same system of paper money from which France has emerged, and we all know the inevitable fate of that system. It is not a victory over a few ships, like that on the coast of Holland, that gives the least support or relief to a paper system. On the news of this victory arriving in England, the funds did not rise a farthing. The government rejoiced, but its creditors were silent.

It is difficult to find a motive, except in folly and madness, for the conduct of the English government. Every calculation and prediction of Mr. Pitt has turned out directly the contrary; yet still he predicts. He predicted, with all the solemn assurance of a magician, that France would be a bankrupt in a few months. He was right as to the thing, but wrong as to the place, for the bankruptcy happened in England whilst the words were yet warm upon his lips. To find out what will happen it is only necessary to know what Mr. Pitt predicts. He is a true prophet if taken in the reverse.

Such is the ruinous condition that England is now in, that great as the difficulties of war are to the people, the difficulties that would accompany peace, are equally as great to the government. Whilst the war continues, Mr. Pitt has a pretence for shutting up the bank. But as that pretence could last no longer than the war lasted, he dreads the peace that would expose the absolute bankruptcy of the government, and unveil to a deceived nation the ruinous effect of his measures. Peace would be a day of accounts to him, and he shuns it as an insolvent debtor shuns a meeting of his creditors. War furnishes him with many pretences; peace would furnish him with none; and he stands alarmed at its consequences. His conduct in the negotiation at Lille can be easily interpreted. It is not for the sake of the nation that he asks to retain some of the taken islands;

for what are islands to a nation that has already too many for her own good, or what are they in comparison to the expense of another campaign in the present depreciating state of the English funds, and even then those islands must be restored? No, it is not for the sake of the nation that he asks. It is for the sake of himself. It is as if he said to France, give me some pretence; cover me from disgrace when my day of reckoning comes.

Any person acquainted with the English government knows, and every minister has some dread on, what is called in England, the winding up of accounts at the end of a war; that is, the final settlement of all expenses incurred by the war; and no minister had ever so great cause of dread as Mr. Pitt. A burnt child dreads the fire, and Pitt has had some experience upon this case. The winding up of accounts at the end of the American war was so great, that, though he was not the cause of it, and came into the ministry with great popularity, he lost it all by undertaking, what was impossible for him to avoid, the voluminous business of the winding up. If such was the case in settling the winding up accounts of his predecessor, how much more has he to apprehend when the accounts to be settled are his own. All men in bad circumstances hate the settlement of accounts, and Pitt, as a minister, is of that description.

But let us take a view of things on a larger ground than the case of a minister. It will then be found, that England, on a comparison of strength with France, when both nations are disposed to exert their utmost, has no possible chance of success. The efforts that England made within the last century, were not generated on the ground of *natural ability*, but of *artificial anticipations*. She ran posterity into debt, and swallowed up in one generation the resources of several generations yet to come, till the project can be pursued no longer.

It is otherwise in France. The vastness of her territory and her population, render the burden easy, that would make a bankrupt of a country like England.

It is not the weight of a thing, but the numbers who are to bear that weight, that makes it feel light or heavy to the shoulders of those who bear it. A land-tax of half as much in the pound as the land-tax is in England, will raise nearly four times as much revenue in France as is raised in England. This is a scale easily understood, by which all the other sections of productive revenue can be measured. Judge then of the difference of natural ability. England is strong in a navy; but that navy costs about eight millions sterling a year, and is one of the causes that has hastened her bankruptcy. The history of navy bills sufficiently proves this. But strong as England is in this case, the fate of navies must finally be decided by the natural ability of each country to carry its navy to the greatest extent; and France is able to support a navy twice as large as that of England, with less than half the expense per head on the people, which the present navy of England costs.

We all know that a navy cannot be raised as expeditiously as an army. But as the average duration of a navy, taking the decay of time, storms, and all circumstances and accidents together, is less than twenty years, every navy must be renewed within that time; and France at the end of a few years, can create and support a navy of double the extent of that of England, and the conduct of the English government will provoke her to it. But of what use are navies otherwise than to make or prevent invasions? Commercially considered they are losses. They scarcely give any protection to the commerce of the countries which have them, compared with the expense of maintaining them, and they insult the commerce of the nations that are neutral.

During the American war, the plan of the armed neu-

trality was formed and put in execution ; but it was inconvenient, expensive, and ineffectual. This being the case, the problem is, does not commerce contain within itself, the means of its own protection? It certainly does, if the neutral nations will employ that means properly.

Instead then of an *armed neutrality*, the plan should be directly the contrary. It should be an *unarmed neutrality*. In the first place, the rights of neutral nations are easily defined. They are such as are exercised by nations in their intercourse with each other in time of peace, and which ought not, and cannot of right, be interrupted in consequence of war breaking out between any two or more of them.

Taking this as a principle, the next thing is to give it effect. The plan of the armed neutrality was to effect it by threatening war ; but an unarmed neutrality can effect it by much easier and more powerful means.

Were the neutral nations to associate, under an honorable injunction of fidelity to each other, and publicly declare to the world, that if any belligerent power shall seize or molest any ship or vessel belonging to the citizens or subjects of any of the powers composing that association, that the whole association will shut its ports against the flag of the offending nation, and will not permit any goods, wares, or merchandise, produced or manufactured in the offending nation or appertaining thereto, to be imported into any of the ports included in the association, until reparation be made to the injured party ; the reparation to be three times the value of the vessel and cargo ; and moreover that all remittances in money, goods, and bills of exchange, do cease to be made to the offending nation, until the said reparation be made. Were the neutral nations only to do this, which it is their direct interest to do, England, as a nation depending on the commerce of neutral nations in time of war, dare not molest them, and France would not. But whilst, from

the want of a common system, they individually permit England to do it, because individually they cannot resist it, they put France under the necessity of doing the same thing. The supreme of all laws, in all cases, is that of self-preservation.

As the commerce of neutral nations would thus be protected by the means that commerce naturally contains within itself, all the naval operations of France and England would be confined within the circle of acting against each other: and in that case it needs no spirit of prophecy to discover that France must finally prevail. The sooner this be done, the better will it be for both nations, and for all the world.

THOMAS PAINE.

To the Council of Five Hundred.

CITIZEN REPRESENTATIVES.—Though it is not convenient to me, in the present situation of my affairs, to subscribe to the loan toward the descent upon England, my economy permits me to make a small patriotic donation. I send an hundred livres, and with it all the wishes of my heart for the success of the descent, and a voluntary offer of any service I can render to promote it.

There will be no lasting peace for France, nor for the world, until the tyranny and corruption of the English government be abolished, and England, like Italy, become a sister republic. As to those men, whether in England, Scotland, or Ireland, who, like Robespierre in France, are covered with crimes, they, like him, have no other resource than in committing more; but the mass of the people are friends to liberty; tyranny and taxation oppress them, but they merit to be free.

Accept, Citizens Representatives, the congratulations of an ancient colleague in the dangers we have passed, and on the happy prospect before us.

Safety and respect, THOMAS PAINE.

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ENGLISH SYSTEM OF FINANCE.

"On the verge, nay even in the gulf of bankruptcy."
Debates in Parliament.

NOTHING, they say, is more certain than death, and nothing more uncertain than the time of dying; yet we can always fix a period beyond which man cannot live, and within some moment of which he will die. We are enabled to do this, not by any spirit of prophecy, or foresight into the event, but by observation of what has happened in all cases of human or animal existence. If then any other subject, such, for instance, as a system of finance, exhibits in its progress a series of symptoms indicating decay, its final dissolution is certain, and the period of it can be calculated from the symptoms it exhibits.

Those who have hitherto written on the English system of finance (the funding system), have been uniformly impressed with the idea that its downfall would happen *some time or other*. They took, however, no data for their opinion, but expressed it predictively, or merely as opinion, from a conviction that the perpetual duration of such a system was a natural impossibility. It is in this manner that Dr. Price has spoken of it; and Smith, in his *Wealth of Nations*, has spoken in the same manner; that is, merely as opinion without data. "The progress," says Smith, "of the enormous debts, which

at present oppress, and will in the long run *most probably ruin*, all the great nations of Europe [he should have said *governments*], has been pretty uniform." But this general manner of speaking, though it might make some impression, carried with it no conviction.

It is not my intention to predict any thing; but I will show from data already known—from symptoms and facts which the English funding system has already exhibited publicly, that it will not continue to the end of Mr. Pitt's life, supposing him to live the usual age of man. How much sooner it may fall, I leave to others to predict.

Let financiers diversify systems of credit as they will, it is nevertheless true, that every system of credit is a system of paper money. Two experiments have already been had upon paper money; the one in America, the other in France. In both those cases the whole capital was emitted, and that whole capital, which in America was called continental money, and in France assignats, appeared in circulation; the consequence of which was, that the quantity became so enormous, and so disproportioned to the quantity of population, and to the quantity of objects upon which it could be employed, that the market, if I may so express it, was glutted with it, and the value of it fell. Between five and six years determined the fate of those experiments. The same fate would have happened to gold and silver, could gold and silver have been issued in the same abundant manner as paper had been and confined within the country as paper money always is, by having no circulation out of it; or, to speak on a larger scale, the same thing would happen in the world, could the world be glutted with gold and silver as America and France has been with paper.

The English system differs from that of America and France in this one particular, that its capital is kept out of sight; that is, it does not appear in circulation. Were the whole capital of the national debt, which at

the time I write this, is almost one hundred millions of pounds sterling, to be emitted in assignats or bills, and that whole quantity put into circulation, as was done in America and in France, those English assignats, or bills, would soon sink in value as those of America and France have done; and that in a greater degree, because the quantity of them would be more disproportioned to the quantity of population in England than was the case in either of the other two countries. A nominal pound sterling in such bills would not be worth one penny.

But though the English system, by thus keeping the capital out of sight, is preserved from hasty destruction, as in the case of America and France, it nevertheless approaches the same fate, and will arrive at it with the same certainty, though by a slower progress. The difference is altogether in the degree of speed by which the two systems approach their fate, which, to speak in round numbers, is as twenty is to one; that is, the English system—that of funding the capital instead of issuing it—contained within itself a capacity of enduring twenty times longer than the systems adopted by America and France; and at the end of that time it would arrive at the same common grave—the Potter's Field—of paper money.

The datum I take for this proposition of twenty to one, is the difference between the capital and the interest at five per cent. Twenty times the interest is equal to the capital. The accumulation of paper money in England is in proportion to the accumulation of the interest upon every new loan; and, therefore, the progress to the dissolution is twenty times slower than if the capital were to be emitted and put into circulation immediately. Every twenty years in the English system is equal to one year in the French and American systems.

Having thus stated the duration of the two systems,—

that of funding upon interest, and that of emitting the whole capital without funding—to be as twenty to one, I come to examine the symptoms of decay, approaching to dissolution, that the English system has already exhibited, and to compare them with similar systems in the French and American Systems.

The English funding system began one hundred years ago; in which time there has been six wars, including the war that ended in 1697.

1. The war that ended, as I have just said, in 1697.
2. The war that began in 1702.
3. The war that began in 1739.
4. The war that began in 1756.
5. The American war, that began in 1775.
6. The present war, that began in 1793.

The national debt, at the conclusion of the war, which ended in 1697, was twenty-one millions and an half. (See Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, chapter on public debts.) We now see it approaching fast to four hundred millions. If between these two extremes of twenty-one millions and four hundred millions, embracing the several expenses of all the including wars, there exists some common ratio that will ascertain arithmetically the amount of the debts at the end of each war, as certainly as the fact is known to be, that ratio will in like manner determine what the amount of the debt will be in all future wars, and will ascertain the period within which the funding system will expire in a bankruptcy of the government; for the ratio I allude to, is the ratio which the nature of the thing has established for itself.

Hitherto no idea has been entertained that any such ratio existed, or could exist, that could determine a problem of this kind, that is, that could ascertain, without having any knowledge of the fact, what the expense of any former war had been, or what the expense of any future war would be; but it is nevertheless true that

such a ratio does exist, as I shall show, and also the mode of applying it.

The ratio I allude to is not in Arithmetical progression like the numbers

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9;

nor yet in geometrical progression, like the numbers

2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256;

but it is in the series of one-half upon each preceding number, like the numbers

8, 12, 18, 27, 40, 60, 90, 135.

Any person can perceive that the second number, 12, is produced by the preceding number, 8, and half 8; and that the third number, 18, is in like manner produced by the preceding number, 12, and half 12; and so on for the rest. They can also see how rapidly the sums increase as the ratio proceeds. The difference between the two first numbers is but four; but the difference between the two last is forty-five: and from thence they may see with what immense rapidity the national debt has increased, and will continue to increase, till it exceeds the ordinary powers of calculation, and loses itself in ciphers.

I come now to apply the ratio as a rule to determine all the cases.

I began with the war that ended in 1697, which was the war in which the funding system began. The expense of that war was twenty-one millions and an half. In order to ascertain the expense of the next war, I add to twenty-one millions and an half, the half thereof (ten millions and three-quarters), which makes thirty-two millions and a quarter for the expense of that war. This thirty-two millions and a quarter, added to the former debt of twenty-one millions and an half, carries the national debt to fifty-three millions and three-quarters. Smith (chapter on Public Debts) says, that the national debt was at this time fifty-three millions.

I proceed to ascertain the expense of the next war, that of 1739, by adding, as in the former case, one-half to the expense of the preceding war. The expense of the preceding war was thirty-two millions and a quarter; for the sake of even numbers, say, thirty-two millions; the half of which (16) makes forty-eight millions for the expense of that war.

I proceed to ascertain the expense of the war of 1756, by adding, according to the ratio, one-half to the expense of the preceding war. The expense of the preceding was taken at 48 millions, the half of which (24) makes 72 millions for the expense of that war. Smith (chapter on Public Debts) says, the expense of the war of 1756 was 72 millions and a quarter.

I proceed to ascertain the expense of the American war, of 1775, by adding, as in the former cases, one-half to the expense of the preceding war. The expense of the preceding war was 72 millions, the half of which (36) makes 108 millions for the expense of that war. In the last edition of Smith (chapter on Public Debts), he says, the expense of the American war was *more than an hundred millions.*

I come now to ascertain the expense of the present war, supposing it to continue as long as former wars have done, and the funding system not to break up before that period. The expense of the preceding war was 108 millions, the half of which (54) makes 162 millions for the expense of the present war. It gives symptoms of going beyond this sum, supposing the funding system not to break up; for the loans of the last year and of the present year are twenty-two millions each, which exceeds the ratio compared with the loans of the preceding war. It will not be from the inability of procuring loans that the system will break up. On the contrary, it is the facility with which loans can be procured, that hastens that event. The loans are altogether paper transac-

tions ; and it is the excess of them that brings on, with accelerating speed, that progressive depreciation of funded paper money that will dissolve the funding system.

I proceed to ascertain the expense of future wars, and I do this merely to show the impossibility of the continuance of the funding system, and the certainty of its dissolution.

The expense of the next war after the present war, according to the ratio which ascertained the preceding cases, will be - - - - - - 243 millions.

Expense of the second war, - - -	364
Expense of the third war, - - -	546
Expense of the fourth war, - - -	819
Expense of the fifth war, - - -	1228
	3200 millions.

which, at only four per cent., will require taxes to the nominal amount of one hundred and twenty-eight millions to pay the annual interest, besides the interest of the present debt, and the expenses of government, which are not included in this account. Is there a man so mad, so stupid, as to suppose this system can continue?

When I first conceived the idea of seeking for some common ratio that should apply as a rule of measurement to all the cases of the funding system, so far as to ascertain the several stages of its approach to dissolution, I had no expectation that any ratio could be found that would apply with so much exactness as this does. I was led to the idea merely by observing that the funding system was a thing in continual progression, and that whatever was in a state of progression might be supposed to admit of, at least some general ratio of measurement, that would apply without any very great variation. But who could have supposed that falling systems, or falling opinions, admitted of a ratio apparently as true as the descent of falling bodies? I have not *made* the ratio any more than Newton made the ratio of gravitation. I

have only discovered it, and explained the mode of applying it.

To show at one view the rapid progression of the funding system to destruction, and to expose the folly of those who blindly believe in its continuance, and who artfully endeavor to impose that belief upon others, I exhibit in the annexed table the expense of each of the six wars since the funding system began, as ascertained by the ratio, and the expense of the six wars yet to come, ascertained by the same ratio.

FIRST SIX WARS.		SECOND SIX WARS.	
1,	21 millions	1,	243 millions
2,	33 millions	2,	364 millions
3,	48 millions	3,	546 millions
4,	72 millions*	4,	819 millions
5,	108 millions	5,	1228 millions
6,	162 millions	6,	1842 millions
	Total 444 millions		Total 5042 millions

Those who are acquainted with the power with which even a small ratio, acting in progression, multiplies in a long series, will see nothing to wonder at in this table. Those who are not acquainted with that subject, and not knowing what else to say, may be inclined to deny it. But it is not their opinion one way, nor mine the other, that can influence the event. The table exhibits the natural march of the funding system to its irredeemable dissolution. Supposing the present government of Eng-

* The actual expense of the war of 1739 did not come up to the sum ascertained by the ratio. But as that which is the natural disposition of a thing, as it is the natural disposition of a stream of water to descend, will, if impeded in its course, overcome by a new effort what it had lost by that impediment, so it was with respect to this war and the next (1756), taken collectively; for the expense of the war of 1756 restored the equilibrium of the ratio, as if it had not been impeded. A circumstance that serves to prove the truth of the ratio more fully than if the interruption had not taken place. The war of 1739 was languid; the efforts were below the value of money at that time; for the ratio is the measure of the depreciation of money in consequence of the funding system; or what comes to the same end, it is the measure of the increase of paper. Every additional quantity of it, whether in bank notes or otherwise, diminishes the *real*, though not the *nominal*, value of the former quantity.

land to continue, and to go on as it has gone on since the funding system began, I would not give twenty shillings for one hundred pounds in the funds to be paid twenty years hence. I do not speak this predictively ; I produce the data upon which that belief is founded ; and which data it is every body's interest to know, who have any thing to do with the funds, or who are going to bequeath property to their descendants to be paid at a future day.

Perhaps it may be asked, that as governments or ministers proceeded by no ratio in making loans or incurring debts, and as nobody intended any ratio, or thought of any, how does it happen that there is one? I answer, that the ratio is founded in necessity ; and I now go to explain what that necessity is.

It will always happen, that the price of labor, or of the produce of labor, be that produce what it may, will be in proportion to the quantity of money in a country, admitting things to take their natural course. Before the invention of the funding system, there was no other money than gold and silver; and as nature gives out those metals with a sparing hand, and in regular annual quantities from the mines, the several prices of things were proportioned to the quantity of money at that time, and so nearly stationary as to vary but little in any fifty or sixty years of that period.

The funding system was a substitute for gold and silver. That substitute was paper ; and the quantity increased as the interest increased upon accumulated loans. This appearance of a new and additional species of money in the nation, soon began to break the relative value which money and the things it will purchase bore to each other before. Every thing rose in price; but the rise at first was little and slow, like the difference in units between two first numbers, 8 and 12, compared with the two last numbers, 90 and 135, in the table. It was, however, sufficient to make itself considerably felt

in a large transaction. When, therefore, government, by engaging in a new war, required a new loan, it was obliged to make a higher loan than the former loan, to balance the increased price to which things had risen; and as that new loan increased the quantity of paper in proportion to the new quantity of interest, it carried the price of things still higher than before. The next loan was again higher, to balance that further increased price; and all this in the same manner, though not in the same degree, that every new emission of continental money in America, or of assignats in France, were greater than the preceding emission, to make head against the advance of prices, till the combat could be maintained no longer. Herein is founded the necessity of which I have just spoken. That necessity proceeds with accelerating velocity, and the ratio I have laid down is the measure of that acceleration; or, to speak the technical language of the subject, it is the measure of the increasing depreciation of funded paper money, which it is impossible to prevent, while the quantity of that money and of bank notes continues to multiply. What else but this can account for the difference between one war costing 21 millions, and another war costing 160 millions?

The difference cannot be accounted for on the score of extraordinary efforts or extraordinary achievements. The war that cost twenty-one millions was the war of the confederates, historically called the grand alliance, consisting of England, Austria and Holland, in the time of William III., against Louis XIV., and in which the confederates were victorious. The present is a war of a much greater confederacy; a confederacy of England, Austria, Prussia, the German empire, Spain, Holland, Naples and Sardinia, eight powers against the French republic singly, and the republic has beaten the whole confederacy. But to return to my subject.

It is said in England, that the value of paper keeps

equal with the value of gold and silver. But the case is not rightly stated : for the fact is, that the paper has *pulled down* the value of gold and silver to a level with itself.—Gold and silver will not purchase so much of any purchasable article at this day as if no paper had appeared, nor so much as it will in any country in Europe where there is no paper. How long this hanging together of money and paper will continue, makes a new case ; because it daily exposes the system to sudden death, independent of the natural death it would otherwise suffer.

I consider the funding system as being now advanced into the last twenty years of its existence. The single circumstance, were there no other, that a war should now cost *nominally* one hundred and sixty millions, which when the system began cost but twenty-one millions, or that the loan for one year only (including the loan to the emperor) should now be *nominally* greater than the whole expense of that war, shows the state of depreciation to which the funding system has arrived. Its depreciation is in the proportion of eight for one, compared with the value of its money when the system began ; which is the state the French assignats stood a year ago (March, 1795), compared with gold and silver. It is, therefore, that I say, that the English funding system has entered on the last twenty years of its existence, comparing each twenty years of the English system with every single year of the American and French systems, as before stated.

Again, supposing the present war to close as former wars have done, and without producing either revolution or reform in England, another war, at least, must be looked for in the space of the twenty years I allude to ; for it has never yet since happened that twenty years have passed off without a war, and that more especially since the English government has dabbled in German

politics, and shown a disposition to insult the world, and the world of commerce, with her navy. The next war will carry the national debt to very nearly seven hundred millions, the interest of which, at four per cent., will be twenty-eight millions besides the taxes for the (then) expenses of government, which will increase in the same proportion, and which will carry the taxes to at least forty millions; and if another war only begins, it will quickly carry them to above fifty; for it is in the last twenty years of the funding system, as in the last year of the American and French systems without funding, that all the great shocks begin to operate.

I have just mentioned that paper in England has *pulled down* the value of gold and silver to a level with itself; and that this *pulling down* of gold and silver money has created the appearance of paper money keeping up. The same thing, and the same mistake, took place in America and in France, and continued for a considerable time after the commencement of their system of paper; and the actual depreciation of money was hidden under that mistake.

It was said in America, at that time, that every thing was becoming *dear;* but gold and silver could then buy those dear articles no cheaper than paper could; and therefore it was not called depreciation. The idea of *dearness* established itself for the idea of depreciation. The same was the case in France. Though every thing rose in price soon after assignats appeared, yet those dear articles could be purchased no cheaper with gold and silver, than with paper, and it was only said that things were *dear.* The same is still the language in England. They called it *dearness.* But they will soon find that it is an actual depreciation, and that this depreciation is the effect of the funding system; which, by crowding such a continually-increasing mass of paper into circulation, carries down the value of gold and silver with it.

But gold and silver will, in the long run, revolt against depreciation, and separate from the value of paper; for the progress of all such systems appears to be, that the paper will take the command in the beginning, and gold and silver in the end.

But this succession in the command of gold and silver over paper, makes a crisis far more eventful to the funding system than to any other system upon which paper can be issued; for, strictly speaking, it is not a crisis of danger, but a symptom of death. It is a death stroke to the funding system. It is a revolution in the whole of its affairs.

If paper be issued without being funded upon interest, emissions of it can be continued after the value of it separates from gold and silver, as we have seen in the two cases of America and France. But the funding system rests altogether upon the value of paper being equal to gold and silver; which will be as long as the paper can continue carrying down the value of gold and silver to the same level to which itself descends, and no longer. But even in this state, that of descending equally together, the minister, whoever he may be, will find himself beset with accumulating difficulties; because the loans and taxes voted for the service of each ensuing year will wither in his hands before the year expires or before they can be applied.—This will force him to have recourse to emissions of what are called exchequer and navy bills, which, by still increasing the mass of paper in circulation, will drive on the depreciation still more rapidly.

It ought to be known that taxes in England are not paid in gold and silver, but in paper (bank notes.) Every person who pays any considerable quantity of taxes, such as malsters, brewers, distillers (I appeal for the truth of it, to any of the collectors of excise in England, or to Mr. Whitebread), knows this to be the case.

There is not gold and silver enough in the nation to pay the taxes in coin, as I shall show ; and consequently there is not money enough in the bank to pay the notes. The interest of the national funded debt is paid at the bank in the same kind of paper in which the taxes are collected. When people find, as they will find, a reservedness among each other in giving gold and silver for bank notes, or the least preference for the former over the latter, they will go for payment to the bank, where they have a right to go. They will do this as a measure of prudence, each one for himself, and the truth or delusion of the funding system will then be proved.

I have said in the foregoing paragraph that there is not gold and silver enough in the nation to pay the taxes in coin, and consequently that there cannot be enough in the bank to pay the notes. As I do not choose to rest any thing upon assertion, I appeal for the truth of this to the publications of Mr. Eden (now called Lord Auckland) and George Chalmers, secretary to the board of trade and plantation, of which Jenkinson (now called Lord Hawkesbury) is president. (These sort of folks change their names so often that it is as difficult to know them as a thief.) Chalmers gives the quantity of gold and silver coin from the returns of coinage at the mint ; and, after deducting for the light gold recoined, says, that the amount of gold and silver coin is *about twenty millions.* He had better not have proved this, especially if he had reflected, that *public credit is suspicion asleep.* The quantity is much too little.

Of this twenty millions (which is not a fourth part of the quantity of gold and silver there is in France, as is shown in Mr. Neckar's *Treatise on the Administration of the Finances*), three millions, at least, must be supposed to be in Ireland, some in Scotland and in the West Indies, Newfoundland, &c. The quantity therefore in England cannot be more than sixteen millions, which is

four millions less than the amount of the taxes. But admitting that there are sixteen millions, not more than a fourth part thereof can be in London, when it is considered that every city, town, village and farm-house in the nation must have a part of it, and that all the great manufactories, which most require cash, are out of London. Of this four millions in London, every banker, merchant, tradesman, in short, every individual must have some. He must be a poor shopkeeper indeed, who has not a few guineas in his till. The quantity of cash, therefore, in the bank never can, on the evidence of circumstances, be so much as two millions; most probably not more than one million; and on this slender twig, always liable to be broken, hangs the whole funding system of four hundred millions, besides many millions in bank notes. The sum in the bank is not sufficient to pay one-fourth of only one year's interest of the national debt, were the creditors to demand payment in cash, or demand cash for the bank notes in which the interest is paid. A circumstance always liable to happen.

One of the amusements that has kept up the farce of the funding system is, that the interest is regularly paid. But as the interest is always paid in bank notes, and as bank notes can always be made for the purpose, this mode of payment proves nothing. The point of proof is, can the bank give cash for the bank notes with which the interest is paid? If it cannot, and it is evident that it cannot, some millions of bank notes must go without payment, and those holders of bank notes who apply last will be worst off. Were the present quantity of cash in the bank paid away, it is next to impossible to see how any new quantity is to arrive. None will arrive from taxes, for the taxes will all be paid in bank notes; and should the government refuse bank notes in payment of taxes, the credit of bank notes will be gone at once, no cash will arise from the business of discounting mer-

chants' bills ; for every merchant will pay off those bills in bank notes, and not in cash. There is, therefore, no means left for the bank to obtain a new supply of cash, after the present quantity be paid away. But besides the impossibility of paying the interest of the funded debt in cash, there are many thousand persons in London and in the country who are holders of bank notes that came into their hands in the fair way of trade, and who are not stock holders in the funds ; and as such persons have had no hand in increasing the demand upon the bank, as those have had, who for their own private interest, like Boyd and others, are contracting, or pretending to contract, for new loans, they will conceive they have a just right that their bank notes should be paid first. Boyd has been very sly in France, in changing his paper into cash. He will be just as sly in doing the same thing in London ; for he has learned to calculate : and then it is probable he will set off for America.

A stoppage of payment at the bank is not a new thing. Smith, in his *Wealth of Nations*, book ii., chap. 2, says, "that in the year 1696, exchequer bills fell forty, fifty and sixty per cent. — bank notes twenty per cent. and the bank stopped payment." That which happened in 1696, may happen again in 1796. The period in which it happened was the last year of the war of King William. It necessarily put a stop to the further emission of exchequer and navy bills, and to the raising of new loans ; and the peace which took place the next year was probably hurried on by this circumstance, and saved the bank from bankruptcy. Smith, in speaking from the circumstances of the bank, upon another occasion, says (book ii., chap. 2), "This great company had been reduced to the necessity of paying in six-pences." When a bank adopts the expedient of paying in six-pences, it is a confession of insolvency.

It is worthy of observation, that every case of failure

in finances, since the system of paper began, has produced a revolution in government, either total or partial. A failure in the finance of the assignats broke up the revolutionary government, and produced the present French constitution. A failure in the finances of the old congress of America and the embarrassments it brought upon the commerce, broke up the system of the old confederation, and produced the federal constitution. If, then, we admit of reasoning by comparison of causes and events, the failure of the English finances will produce some change in the government of the country.

As to Mr. Pitt's project of paying off the national debt by applying a million a year for that purpose, while he continues adding more than twenty millions a year to it, it is like setting a man with a wooden leg to run after a hare. The longer he runs the farther he is off.

When I said that the funding system had entered the last twenty years of its existence, I certainly did not mean that it would continue twenty years, and then expire as a lease would. I meant to describe that age of decrepitude in which death is every day to be expected, and life cannot continue long. But the death of credit, or that state that is called bankruptcy, is not always marked by those progressive stages of visible decline, that mark the decline of natural life. In the progression of natural life, age cannot counterfeit youth, nor conceal the departure of juvenile abilities. But it is otherwise with respect to the death of credit; for though all the approaches to bankruptcy may actually exist in circumstances, they admit of being concealed by appearances. Nothing is more common than to see the bankrupt of to-day a man of credit but the day before; yet no sooner is the real state of his affairs known, than every body can see that he had been insolvent long before. In London, the greatest theatre of bankruptcy in Europe, this part of the subject will be well and feelingly understood.

Mr. Pitt continually talks of credit, and of the national resources. These are two of the feigned appearances by which the approaches to bankruptcy are concealed. That which he calls credit may exist, as I have just shown, in a state of insolvency, and is always what I have before described it to be, *suspicion asleep.*

As to national resources, Mr. Pitt, like all the English financiers that preceded him since the funding system began, has uniformly mistaken the nature of a resource; that is, they have mistaken it consistently with the delusion of the funding system; but time is explaining the delusion. That which he calls, and which they called, a resource, is not a resource, but is the *anticipation* of a resource. They have anticipated what *would have been* a resource in another generation, had not the use of it been so anticipated. The funding system is a system of anticipation. Those who established it an hundred years ago, anticipated the resources of those who were to live an hundred years after: for the people of the present day have to pay the interest of the debts contracted at that time, and of all debts contracted since. But it is the last feather that breaks the horse's back. Had the system began an hundred years before, the amount of taxes at this time to pay the annual interest at four per cent. (could we suppose such a system of insanity to have thus continued) would be two hundred and twenty millions annually: for the capital of the debt would be 5486 millions, according to the ratio that ascertains the expense of the wars for the hundred years that are past. But long before it could have reached this period, the value of bank notes, from the immense quantity of them (for it is in paper only that such a nominal revenue could be collected), would have been as low or lower than continental paper money has been in America, or assignats in France; and as for the idea of

exchanging them for gold and silver, it is too absurd to be contradicted.

Do we not see that nature, in all her operations, disowns the visionary basis upon which the funding system is built? She acts always by renewed successions, and never by accumulating additions, perpetually progressing. Animals and vegetables, men and trees, have existed since the world began: but that existence has been carried on by succession of generations, and not by continuing the same men and the same trees in existence that existed first; and to make room for the new she removes the old. Every natural idiot can see this. It is the stock-jobbing idiot only that mistakes. He has conceived that art can do what nature cannot. He is teaching her a new system; that there is no occasion for man to die; that the scheme of creation can be carried on upon the plan of the funding system; that it can proceed by continual additions of new beings like new loans, and all live together in eternal youth. Go, count the graves, thou idiot, and learn the folly of thy arithmetic.

But besides these things, there is something visibly farcical in the whole operation of loaning. It is scarcely more than four years ago that such a rot of bankruptcy spread itself over London, that the whole commercial fabric tottered; trade and credit were at a stand; and such was the state of things, that to prevent or suspend a general bankruptcy, the government lent the merchants six millions in *government* paper, and now the merchants lend the government twenty-two millions in *their* paper; and two parties, Boyd and Morgan, men but little known, contend who shall be the lenders. What a farce is this! It reduces the operation of loaning to accommodation paper, in which the competitors contend, not who shall lend, but who shall sign, because there is something to be got for signing.

Every English stock-jobber and minister boasts of the credit of England. Its credit, say they, is greater than that of any country in Europe. There is a good reason for this: for there is not another country in Europe that could be made the dupe of such a delusion. The English funding system will remain a monument of wonder, not so much on account of the extent to which it has been carried, as of the folly of believing in it.

Those who had formerly predicted that the funding system would break up when the debt should amount to one hundred or one hundred and fifty millions, erred only in not distinguishing between insolvency and actual bankruptcy: for the insolvency commenced as soon as the government became unable to pay the interest in cash, or to give cash for the bank notes in which the interest was paid, whether that inability was known or not, or whether it was suspected or not. Insolvency always takes place before bankruptcy: for bankruptcy is nothing more than the publication of that insolvency.

In the affairs of an individual, it often happens that insolvency exists several years before bankruptcy, and that the insolvency is concealed and carried on till the individual is not able to pay one shilling in the pound. A government can ward off bankruptcy longer than an individual: but insolvency will inevitably produce bankruptcy, whether in an individual or in a government. If then the quantity of bank notes payable on demand, which the bank has issued, are greater than the bank can pay off, the bank is insolvent: and when that insolvency is declared, it is bankruptcy.*

* Among the delusions that have been imposed upon the nation by ministers to give a false coloring to its affairs, and by none more than by Mr. Pitt, is a motley, amphibious-charactered thing called the *balance of trade*. This balance of trade, as it is called, is taken from the custom-house books, in which entries are made of all cargoes exported, and also of all cargoes imported, in each year —and when the value of the exports, according to the price set upon them by the exporter or by the custom-house, is greater than the value of the imports,

I come now to show the several ways by which bank notes get into circulation. I shall afterwards offer an estimate on the total quantity or amount of bank notes existing at this moment.

The bank acts in three capacities. As a bank of discount; as a bank of deposit; and as a bank for the government.

1st. As a bank of discount. The bank discounts merchants' bills of exchange for two months. When a merchant has a bill that will become due at the end of two months, and wants payment before that time, the bank advances that payment to him, deducting therefrom at the rate of five per cent. per annum. The bill of exchange remains at the bank as a pledge or pawn, and at the end of two months it must be redeemed. This transaction is done altogether in paper; for the profits of the bank, as a bank of discount, arise entirely from its making use of paper as money. The bank gives bank notes to the merchant in discounting the bill of exchange, and the redeemer of the bill pays bank notes to the bank

estimated in the same manner, they say, the balance of trade is much in their favor.

The custom-house books prove regularly enough that so many cargoes have been exported, and so many imported — but this is all that they prove, or were intended to prove. They have nothing to do with the balance of profit or loss; and it is ignorance to appeal to them upon that account: for the case is, that the greater the loss is in any one year, the higher will this thing called the balance of trade appear to be according to the custom-house books. For example, nearly the whole of the Mediterranean convoy has been taken by the French this year consequently those cargoes will not appear as imports on the custom-house books, and therefore the balance of trade, by which they mean the profits of it, will appear to be so much the greater, as the loss amounts to — and on the other hand, had the loss not happened, the profits would have appeared to have been so much the less. All the losses happening at sea to returning cargoes, by accidents, by the elements, or by capture, make the balance appear the higher on the side of the exports and were they all lost at sea, it would appear to be all profit on the custom-house books. Also every cargo of exports that is lost and occasions another to be sent, adds in like manner to the side of the exports, and appears as profit. This year the balance of trade will appear high, because the losses have been great by capture and by storms. The ignorance of the British Parliament in listening to this hackneyed imposition of ministers about the balance of trade is astonishing. It shows how little they know of national affairs — and Mr. Grey may as well talk Greek to them, as to make motions about the state of the nation. They understand only fox-hunting and the game laws.

in redeeming it. It very seldom happens that any real money passes between them.

If the profits of a bank be, for example, two hundred thousand pounds a year (a great sum to be made merely by exchanging one sort of paper for another, and which shows also that the merchants of that place are pressed for money for payments, instead of having money to spare to lend to government), it proves that the bank discounts to the amount of four millions annually, or £666,666 every two months; and as there never remain in the bank more than two month's pledges, of the value of £666,666 at any one time, the amount of bank notes in circulation at any one time should not be more than to that amount. This is sufficient to show, that the present immense quantity of bank notes, which are distributed through every city, town, village and farm-house in England, cannot be accounted for on the score of discounting.

2d. As a bank of deposit. To deposit money at the bank means to lodge it there for the sake of convenience, and to be drawn out at any moment the depositor pleases, or to be paid away to his order. When the business of discounting is great, that of depositing is necessarily small. No man deposits and applies for discounts at the same time; for it would be like paying interest for lending money, instead of for borrowing it. The deposits that are now made at the bank are almost entirely in bank notes, and consequently they add nothing to the ability of the bank to pay off the bank notes that may be presented for payment; and besides this, the deposits are no more the property of the bank than the cash or bank notes in a merchant's counting house are the property of his bookkeeper. No great increase therefore of bank notes, beyond what the discounting business admits, can be accounted for on the score of deposits.

3d. The bank acts as banker for the government.

This is the connection that threatens to ruin every public bank. It is through this connection that the credit of a bank is forced far beyond what it ought to be, and still further beyond its ability to pay. It is through this connection, that such an immense, redundant quantity of bank notes have gotten into circulation; and which, instead of being issued because there was property in the bank, have been issued because there was none.

When the treasury is empty, which happens in almost every year of every war, its coffers at the bank are empty also. It is in this condition of emptiness that the minister has recourse to emissions of what are called exchequer and navy bills, which continually generates a new increase of bank notes, and which are sported upon the public, without there being property in the bank to pay them. — These exchequer and navy bills (being, as I have said, emitted because the treasury and its coffers at the bank are empty, and cannot pay the demands that come in) are no other than an acknowledgment that the bearer is entitled to receive so much money. They may be compared to the settlement of an account, in which the debtor acknowledges the balance he owes, and for which he gives a note of hand; or to a note of hand given to raise money upon it.

Sometimes the bank discounts those bills as it would discount merchants' bills of exchange; sometimes it purchases them of the holders at the current price; and sometimes it agrees with the ministers to pay an interest upon them to the holders, and keep them in circulation.

In every one of these cases an additional quantity of bank notes gets into circulation, and are sported, as I have said, upon the public, without there being property in the bank, as banker for the government, to pay them; and besides this, the bank has now no money of its own; for the money that was originally subscribed to begin

the credit of the bank with, at its first establishment, has been lent to government and wasted long ago.

"The bank," says Smith (book ii., chap. 2), "acts not only as an ordinary bank, but as a great engine of state; it receives and pays the greater part of the annuities which are due to the creditors of the *public*." (It is worth observing, that the *public*, or the *nation*, is always put for the government, in speaking of debts.) "It circulates," says Smith, "exchequer bills, and it advances to government the annual amount of the land and malt taxes, which are frequently not paid till several years afterwards." (This advancement is also done in bank notes, for which there is not property in the bank.) "In those different operations," says Smith, "*its duty to the public* may sometimes have obliged it, without any fault of its directors, *to overstock the circulation with paper money*"—bank notes. How its *duty to the public* can induce it *to overstock that public* with promissory bank notes which it *cannot pay*, and thereby expose the individuals of that public to ruin, is too paradoxical to be explained; for it is on the credit which individuals *give to the bank*, by receiving and circulating its notes, and not upon its *own* credit or its *own* property, for it has none, that the bank sports. If, however, it be the duty of the bank to expose the public to this hazard, it is at least equally the duty of the individuals of that public to get their money and take care of themselves; and leave it to placemen, pensioners, government contractors, Reeves' association, and the members of both houses of Parliament, who have voted away the money at the nod of the minister, to continue the credit if they can, and for which their estates, individually and collectively, ought to answer as far as they will go.

There has always existed, and still exists, a mysterious, suspicious connection, between the minister and the directors of the bank, and which explains itself not other-

wise than by a continual increase of bank notes. Without, therefore, entering into any further details of the various contrivances by which bank notes are issued, and thrown upon the public, I proceed, as I before mentioned, to offer an estimate on the total quantity of bank notes in circulation.

However disposed governments may be to extort money by taxes from the people, there is a limit to the practice established in the nature of things. That limit is the proportion between the quantity of money in a nation, be that quantity of money what it may, and the greatest quantity of taxes that can be raised upon it. People have other uses for money besides paying taxes; and it is only a proportional part of that money they can spare for taxes, as it is only a proportional part they can spare for house-rent, for clothing, or for any other particular use. These proportions find out and establish themselves; and that with such exactness, that if any one part exceeds its proportion, all the other parts feel it.

Before the invention of paper money (bank notes), there was no other money in the nation than gold and silver, and the greatest quantity of money that ever was raised in taxes during that period never exceeded a fourth part of the quantity of money in the nation. It was high taxing when it came to this point. The taxes in the time of William III. never reached to four millions before the invention of paper, and the quantity of money in the nation at that time was estimated to be about sixteen millions. The same proportions established themselves in France. There was no paper money in France before the present revolution, and the taxes were collected in gold and silver money. The highest quantity of taxes never exceeded twenty-two millions sterling; and the quantity of gold and silver money in the nation at the same time, as stated by M. Neckar, from returns of coinage at the mint, in his *Treatise on the Administration*

of the Finances, was about ninety millions sterling. To go beyond this limit of a fourth part, in England, they were obliged to introduce paper money ; and the attempt to go beyond it in France, where paper could not be introduced, broke up the government.

This proportion, therefore, of a fourth part is the limit which the nature of the thing establishes for itself, be the quantity of money in a nation more or less.

The amount of taxes in England at this time is full twenty millions ; and therefore the quantity of gold and silver and of bank notes, taken together, amounts to eighty millions. The quantity of gold and silver, as stated by Lord Hawkesbury's secretary (George Chalmers), as I have before shown, is twenty millions ; and, therefore, the total amount of bank notes in circulation, all made payable on demand, is sixty millions. This enormous sum will astonish the most stupid stock-jobber, and overpower the credulity of the most thoughtless Englishman : but were it only a third part of that sum, the bank cannot pay half a crown in the pound.

There is something curious in the movements of this modern complicated machine, the funding system ; and it is only now that it is beginning to unfold the full extent of its movements. In the first part of its movements it gives great powers into the hands of government, and in the last part it takes them completely away.

The funding system set out with raising revenues under the name of loans, by means of which government became both prodigal and powerful. The loaners assumed the name of creditors, and though it was soon discovered that loaning was government-jobbing, those pretended loaners, or the persons who purchased into the funds afterwards, conceived themselves not only to be creditors, but to be the *only* creditors.

But such has been the operation of this complicated machine, the funding system, that it has produced, un-

perceived, a second generation of creditors, more numerous and far more formidable, and withal more real than the first generation ; for every holder of a bank note is a creditor, and a real creditor, and the debt due to him is made payable on demand. The debt, therefore, which the government owes to individuals is composed of two parts ; the one about four hundred millions bearing interest, the other about sixty millions payable on demand. The one is called the funded debt, the other is the debt due in bank notes.

The second debt (that contained in the bank notes) has, in a great measure, been incurred to pay the interest of the first debt ; so that in fact little or no real interest has been paid by government. The whole has been delusion and fraud. Government first contracted a debt, in the form of loans, with one class of people, and then ran clandestinely in debt with another class, by means of bank notes, to pay the interest. Government acted of itself in contracting the first debt, and made a machine of the bank to contract the second. It is this second debt that changes the seat of power and the order of things ; for it puts it in the power of even a small part of the holders of bank notes (had they no other motives than disgust at Pitt and Grenville's sedition bills), to control any measure of government they found to be injurious to their interest ; and that not by popular meetings, or popular societies, but by the simple and easy operation of withholding their credit from that government ; that is, by individually demanding payment, at the bank, for every bank note that comes into their hands. Why should Pitt and Grenville expect that the very men whom they insult and injure, should, at the same time, continue to support the measures of Pitt and Grenville, by giving credit to their promissory notes of payment? No new emissions of bank notes could go on while payment was demanding on the old, and the

cash in the bank wasting daily away; nor any new advances be made to government, or to the emperor, to carry on the war; nor any new emission to be made on exchequer bills.

"*The bank*," says Smith (book ii., chap. 2), is "*a great engine of state.*" And in the same paragraph he says, "*The stability of the bank is equal to that of the British government;*" which is the same as to say that the stability of the government is equal to that of the bank, and no more. If then the bank cannot pay, the *arch-treasurer of the holy Roman empire* (S. R. I. A.*) is a bankrupt. When folly invented titles, she did not attend to their application; for ever since the government of England has been in the hands of *arch-treasurers*, it has been running into bankruptcy; and as to the arch-treasurer *apparent*, he has been a bankrupt long ago. What a miserable prospect has England before its eyes!

Before the war of 1755, there were no bank notes lower than twenty pounds. During that war, bank notes of fifteen pounds and of ten pounds were coined; and now, since the commencement of the present war, they are coined as low as five pounds. These five pound notes will circulate chiefly among little shop-keepers, butchers, bakers, market people, renters of small houses, lodgers, &c. All the high departments of commerce, and the affluent stations of life were already *overstocked*, as Smith expresses it, with the bank notes. No place remained open wherein to crowd an additional quantity of bank notes but among the class of people I have just mentioned, and the means of doing this could be best effected by coining five pound notes.

This conduct has the appearance of that of an unprincipled insolvent, who, when on the verge of bankruptcy to the amount of many thousands, will

* Part of the inscription on an English guinea.

borrow as low as five pounds of the servants in his house, and break the next day.

But whatever monetary relief or aid the minister and his bank might expect from this low contrivance of five pound notes, it will increase the inability of the bank to pay the higher notes, and hasten the destruction of all; for even the small taxes that used to be paid in money will now be paid in those notes, and the bank will soon find itself with scarcely any other money than what the hair-powder guinea tax brings in.

The bank notes make the most serious part of the business of finance: what is called the national funded debt is but a trifle when put in comparison with it; yet the case of the bank notes has never been touched upon. But it certainly ought to be known upon what authority, whether that of the minister or of the directors, and upon what foundation, such immense quantities are issued. I have stated the amount of them at sixty millions; I have produced data for that estimation; and besides this, the apparent quantity of them, far beyond that of gold and silver in the nation, corroborates the statement. Were there but a third part of sixty millions, the bank cannot pay half a crown in the pound; for no new supply of money, as before said, can arrive at the bank, as all the taxes will be paid in paper.

When the funding system began, it was not doubted that the loans that had been borrowed would be repaid. Government not only propagated that belief, but it began paying them off. In time this profession came to be abandoned: and it is not difficult to see that bank notes will march the same way; for the amount of them is only another debt under another name; and the probability is that Mr. Pitt will at last propose funding them. In that case bank notes will not be so valuable as French assignats. The assignats have a solid property in reserve, in the national domains; bank notes have none;

and, besides this, the English revenue must then sink down to what the amount of it was before the funding system began—between three and four millions; one of which the *arch-treasurer* would require for himself, and the arch-treasurer *apparent* would require three-quarters of a million more to pay his debts." "*In France*," says Sterne, "*they order these things better.*"

I have now exposed the English system of finance to the eyes of all nations; for this work will be published in all languages. In doing this, I have done an act of justice to those numerous citizens of neutral nations who have been imposed upon by that fraudulent system, and who have property at stake upon the event.

As an individual citizen of America, and as far as an individual can go, I have revenged (if I may use the expression without any immoral meaning) the piratical depredations committed on the American commerce by the English government. I have retaliated for France on the subject of finance; and I conclude with retorting on Mr. Pitt the expression he used against France, and say, that the English system of finance "IS ON THE VERGE, NAY EVEN IN THE GULF OF BANKRUPTCY."

THOMAS PAINE.

Paris, 19th Germinal, 4th year of the Republic, April 8, 1796.

AGRARIAN JUSTICE.*

TO preserve the benefits of what is called civilized life, and to remedy, at the same time, the evil which it has produced, ought to be considered as one of the first objects of reformed legislation.

Whether that state that is proudly, perhaps erroneously, called civilization, has most promoted or most injured the general happiness of man, is a question that may be strongly contested. On one side, the spectator is dazzled by splendid appearances; on the other, he is shocked by extremes of wretchedness; both of which he has erected. The most affluent and the most miserable of the human race are to be found in the countries that are called civilized.

To understand what the state of society ought to be, it is necessary to have some idea of the natural and primitive state of man; such as it is at this day among the Indians of North America. There is not, in that state, any of those spectacles of human misery which poverty and want present to our eyes in all the towns and streets of Europe. Poverty, therefore, is a thing created by that which is called civilized life. It exists

* The occasion of the publication of the following piece was a Sermon preached by Watson, Bishop of Landaff, entitled "The wisdom and goodness of God, in having made both *rich* and *poor*; with an appendix, containing reflections on the present state of England and France."

The error contained in the title of this Sermon determined me to publish my *Agrarian Justice*. It is wrong to say that God made *rich* and *poor*; he made only *male* and *female*, and he gave them the earth for their inheritance.

not in the natural state. On the other hand, the natural state is without those advantages which flow from agriculture, arts, science and manufactures.

The life of an Indian is a continual holiday, compared with the poor of Europe; and, on the other hand, it appears to be abject when compared to the rich. Civilization, therefore, or that which is so called, has operated two ways; to make one part of society more affluent, and the other more wretched, than would have been the lot of either in a natural state.

It is always possible to go from the natural to the civilized state, but it is never possible to go from the civilized to the natural state. The reason is, that man, in a natural state, subsisting by hunting, requires ten times the quantity of land to range over, to procure himself sustenance, than would support him in a civilized state, where the earth is cultivated. When, therefore, a country becomes populous by the additional aids of cultivation, arts and science, there is a necessity of preserving things in that state; because without it, there cannot be sustenance for more, perhaps, than a tenth part of its inhabitants. The thing, therefore, now to be done is, to remedy the evils and preserve the benefits that have arisen to society, by passing from the natural to that which is called the civilized state.

In taking the matter upon this ground, the first principle of civilization ought to have been, and ought still to be, that the condition of every person born into the world, after a state of civilization commences, ought not to be worse than if he had been born before that period. But the fact is, that the condition of millions, in every country in Europe, is far worse than if they had been born before civilization began, or had been born among the Indians of North America at the present day. I will show how this fact has happened.

It is a position not to be controverted, that the earth,

in its natural, uncultivated state, was and ever would have continued to be, *the common property of the human race*. In that state every man would have been born to property. He would have been a joint life proprietor with the rest in the property of the soil, and in all its natural productions, vegetable and animal.

But the earth in its natural state, as before said, is capable of supporting but a small number of inhabitants compared with what it is capable of doing in a cultivated state. And as it is impossible to separate the improvement made by cultivation, from the earth itself, upon which that improvement is made, the idea of landed property arose from that inseparable connection; but it is nevertheless true, that it is the value of the improvement only, and not the earth itself, that is individual property. Every proprietor, therefore, of cultivated land owes to the community a *ground-rent*; for I know of no better term to express the idea by, for the land which he holds: and it is from this ground-rent that the fund proposed in this plan is to issue.

It is deducible, as well from the nature of the thing, as from all the histories transmitted to us, that the idea of landed property commenced with cultivation, and that there was no such thing as landed property before that time. It could not exist in the first state of man, that of hunters. It did not exist in the second state, that of shepherds: neither Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, nor Job, so far as the history of the Bible may be credited in probable things, were owners of land. Their property consisted, as is always enumerated, in flocks and herds, and they travelled with them from place to place. The frequent contentions at that time, about the use of a well in the dry country of Arabia, where those people lived, show also that there was no landed property. It was not admitted that land could be claimed as property.

There could be no such thing as landed property

originally. Man did not make the earth, and, though he had a natural right to *occupy* it, he had no right to *locate as his property* in perpetuity any part of it: neither did the creator of the earth open a land office, from whence the first title-deeds should issue. Whence, then, arose the idea of landed property? I answer as before, that when cultivation began, the idea of landed property began with it, from the impossibility of separating the improvement made by cultivation, from the earth itself upon which that improvement was made. The value of the improvement so far exceeded the value of the natural earth, at that time, as to absorb it; till, in the end, the common right of all became confounded into the cultivated right of the individual. But there are, nevertheless, distinct species of rights, and will continue to be, so long as the earth endures.

It is only by tracing things to their origin that we can gain rightful ideas of them, and it is by gaining such ideas that we discover the boundary that divides right from wrong, and which teaches every man to know his own. I have entitled this tract *Agrarian Justice*, to distinguish it from Agrarian Law. Nothing could be more unjust than Agrarian Law in a country improved by cultivation; for though every man, as an inhabitant of the earth, is a joint proprietor of it in its natural state, it does not follow that he is a joint proprietor of cultivated earth. The additional value made by cultivation, after the system was admitted, became the property of those who did it, or who inherited it from them, or who purchased it. It had originally no owner. Whilst, therefore, I advocate the right, and interest myself in the hard case of all those who have been thrown out of their natural inheritance by the introduction of the system of landed property, I equally defend the right of the possessor to the part which is his.

Cultivation is, at least, one of the greatest natural

improvements ever made by human invention. It has given to created earth a ten-fold value. But the landed monopoly that began with it, has produced the greatest evil. It has dispossessed more than half the inhabitants of every nation of their natural inheritance, without providing for them, as ought to have been done, an indemnification for that loss, and has thereby created a species of poverty and wretchedness that did not exist before.

In advocating the case of the persons thus dispossessed, it is a right, and not a charity, that I am pleading for. But it is that kind of right, which being neglected at first, could not be brought forward afterwards, till heaven had opened the way by a revolution in the system of government. Let us then do honor to revolutions by justice, and give currency to their principles by blessings.

Having thus, in a few words, opened the merits of the case, I shall now proceed to the plan I have to propose, which is:

To create a national fund, out of which there shall be paid to every person, when arrived at the age of twenty-one years, the sum of fifteen pounds sterling, as a compensation, in part, for the loss of his or her natural inheritance, by the introduction of the system of landed property.

And also, the sum of ten pounds per annum, during life, to every person now living, of the age of fifty years, and to all others as they shall arrive at that age.

MEANS BY WHICH THE FUND IS TO BE CREATED.

I have already established the principle, namely, that the earth, in its natural, uncultivated state, was, and ever would have continued to be, the *common property of the human race;* that in that state, every person would have been born to property; and that the system of landed property, by its inseparable connection with cultivation, and with what is called civilized life, has

absorbed the property of all those whom it dispossessed, without providing, as ought to have been done, an indemnification for that loss.

The fault, however, is not in the present possessors. No complaint is intended, or ought to be alleged against them, unless they adopt the crime by opposing justice. The fault is in the system, and it has stolen imperceptibly upon the world, aided afterwards by the agrarian law of the sword. But the fault can be made to reform itself by successive generations, without diminishing or deranging the property of any of the present possessors, and yet the operation of the fund can commence, and be in full activity the first year of its establishment, or soon after, as I shall show.

It is proposed that the payments, as already stated, be made to every person, rich or poor. It is best to make it so, to prevent invidious distinctions. It is also right it should be so, because it is in lieu of the natural inheritance, which, as a right, belongs to every man, over and above the property he may have created or inherited from those who did. Such persons as do not choose to receive it can throw it into the common fund.

Taking it then for granted, that no person ought to be in a worse condition when born under what is called a state of civilization, than he would have been, had he been born in a state of nature, and that civilization ought to have made, and ought still to make, provision for that purpose, it can only be done by subtracting from property, a portion equal in value to the natural inheritance it has absorbed.

Various methods may be proposed for this purpose, but that which appears to be the best, not only because it will operate without deranging any present possessors, or without interfering with the collection of taxes, or *emprunts* necessary for the purposes of government and the revolution, but because it will be the least trouble-

some and the most effectual, and also because the subtraction will be made at a time that bests admits it, which is at the moment that property is passing by the death of one person to the possession of another. In this case, the bequeather gives nothing: the receiver pays nothing. The only matter to him is, that the monopoly of natural inheritance, to which there never was a right, begins to cease in his person. A generous man would not wish it to continue, and a just man will rejoice to see it abolished.

My state of health prevents my making sufficient inquiries with respect to the doctrine of probabilities, whereon to found calculations with such degrees of certainty as they are capable of. What, therefore, I offer on this head is more the result of observation and reflection, than of received information; but I believe it will be found to agree sufficiently enough with fact.

In the first place, taking twenty-one years as the epoch of maturity, all the property of a nation, real and personal, is always in the possession of persons above that age. It is then necessary to know, as a datum of calculation, the average of years which persons above that age will live. I take this average to be about thirty years, for though many persons will live forty, fifty or sixty years after the age of twenty-one years, others will die much sooner, and some in every year of that time.

Taking, then, thirty years as the average of time, it will give, without any material variation one way or other, the average of time in which the whole property or capital of a nation, or a sum equal thereto, will have passed through one entire revolution in descent, that is, will have gone by deaths to new possessors; for though, in many instances, some parts of this capital will remain forty, fifty or sixty years in the possession of one person, other parts will have revolved two or three times before those thirty years expire, which will bring it to that

average; for were one-half the capital of a nation to revolve twice in thirty years, it would produce the same fund as if the whole revolved once.

Taking, then, thirty years as the average of time in which the whole capital of a nation, or a sum equal thereto, will revolve once, the thirtieth part thereof will be the sum that will revolve every year, that is, will go by deaths to new possessors; and this last sum being thus known, and the ratio per centum to be subtracted from it being determined, will give the annual amount or income of the proposed fund, to be applied as already mentioned.

In looking over the discourse of the English minister, Pitt, in his opening of what is called in England the budget (the scheme of finance for the year 1796), I find an estimate of the national capital of that country. As this estimate of a national capital is prepared ready to my hand, I take it as a datum to act upon. When a calculation is made upon the known capital of any nation, combined with its population, it will serve as a scale for any other nation, in proportion as its capital and population be more or less. I am the more disposed to take this estimate of Mr. Pitt, for the purpose of showing to that minister, upon his own calculation, how much better money may be employed, than in wasting it, as he has done, on the wild project of setting up Bourbon kings. What, in the name of heaven, are Bourbon kings to the people of England? It is better that the people have bread.

Mr. Pitt states the national capital of England, real and personal, to be one thousand three hundred millions sterling, which is about one-fourth part of the national capital of France, including Belgia. The event of the last harvest in each country proves that the soil of France is more productive than that of England, and that it can better support twenty-four or twenty-five mil-

lions of inhabitants than that of England can seven, or seven and a half.

The thirtieth part of this capital of £1,300,000,000 is £43,333,333, which is the part that will revolve every year by deaths in that country to new possessors; and the sum that will annually revolve in France in the proportion of four to one, will be about one hundred and seventy-three millions sterling. From this sum of £43,333,333 annually revolving, is to be subtracted the value of the natural inheritance absorbed in it, which, perhaps, in fair justice, cannot be taken at less, and ought not to be taken for more, than a tenth part.

It will always happen, that of the property thus revolving by deaths every year, part will descend in a direct line to sons and daughters, and the other part collaterally, and the proportion will be found to be about three to one; that is, about thirty millions of the above sum will descend to direct heirs, and the remaining sum of £13,333,333 to more distant relations, and part to strangers.

Considering, then, that man is always related to society, that relationship will become comparatively greater in proportion as the next of kin is more distant, it is therefore consistent with civilization to say, that where there are no direct heirs, society shall be heir to a part over and above the tenth part *due* to society. If this additional part be from five to ten or twelve per cent. in proportion as the next of kin be nearer or more remote, so as to average with the escheats that may fall, which ought always to go to society and not to the government, an addition of ten per cent. more; the produce from the annual sum of £43,333,333 will be:

From £30,000,000 at ten per cent., - -	£3,000,000
From 13,333,333 at ten per cent., with the addition of ten per cent. more. -	2,666,666
£43,333,333	£5,666,666

Having thus arrived at the annual amount of the proposed fund, I come, in the next place, to speak of the population proportioned to this fund, and to compare it with the uses to which the fund is to be applied.

The population (I mean that of England) does not exceed seven millions and a half, and the number of persons above the age of fifty will in that case be about four hundred thousand. There would not, however, be more than that number that would accept the proposed ten pounds sterling per annum, though they would be entitled to it. I have no idea it would be accepted by many persons who had a yearly income of two or three hundred pounds sterling. But as we often see instances of rich people falling into sudden poverty, even at the age of sixty, they would always have the right of drawing all the arrears due to them. Four millions, therefore, of the above annual sum of £5,666,666 will be required for four hundred thousand aged persons, at ten pounds sterling each.

I come now to speak of the persons annually arriving at twenty-one years of age. If all the persons who died were above the age of twenty-one years, the number of persons annually arriving at that age must be equal to the annual number of deaths, to keep the population stationary. But the greater part die under the age of twenty-one, and therefore the number of persons annually arriving at twenty-one will be less than half the number of deaths. The whole number of deaths upon a population of seven millions and a half will be about 220,000 annually. The number arriving at twenty-one years of age will be about 100,000. The whole number of these will not receive the proposed fifteen pounds, for the reasons already mentioned, though, as in the former case, they would be entitled to it. Admitting then that a tenth part declined receiving it, the amount would stand thus:

Fund annually, - - - - - - -		£5,666,666
To 400,000 aged persons at £10 each, - - - - -	£4,000,000	
To 90,000 persons of 21 years, £15 sterling each, -	1,350,000	
		5,350,000
	Remains	£316,666

There are, in every country, a number of blind and lame persons, totally incapable of earning a livelihood. But as it will always happen that the greater number of blind persons will be among those who are above the age of fifty years, they will be provided for in that class. The remaining sum of £316,666 will provide for the lame and blind under that age, at the same rate of £10 annually for each person.

Having now gone through all the necessary calculations, and stated the particulars of the plan, I shall conclude with some observations.

It is not charity, but a right; not bounty, but justice, that I am pleading for. The contrast of affluence and wretchedness continually meeting and offending the eye, is like dead and living bodies chained together. Though I care as little about riches as any man, I am a friend to riches because they are capable of good. I care not how affluent some may be, provided that none be miserable in consequence of it. But it is impossible to enjoy affluence with the felicity it is capable of being enjoyed, whilst so much misery is mingled in the scene. The sight of the misery, and the unpleasant sensations it suggests, which, though they may be suffocated, cannot be extinguished, are a greater drawback upon the felicity of affluence, than the proposed 10 per cent. upon property is worth. He that would not give the one to get rid of the other, has no charity, even for himself.

There are, in every country, some magnificent charities established by individuals. It is, however, but little

that any individual can do, when the whole extent of the misery to be relieved is considered. He may satisfy his conscience, but not his heart. He may give all that he has, and that all will relieve but little. It is only by organizing civilization upon such principles as to act like a system of pullies, that the whole weight of misery can be removed.

The plan here proposed will reach the whole. It will immediately relieve and take out of view three classes of wretchedness—the blind, the lame and the aged poor; and it will furnish the rising generation with means to prevent their becoming poor; and it will do this, without deranging or interfering with any national measures. To show that this will be the case, it is sufficient to observe, that the operation and effect of the plan will, in all cases, be the same, as if every individual were *voluntarily* to make his will, and dispose of his property, in the manner here proposed.

But it is justice, and not charity, that is the principle of the plan. In all great cases it is necessary to have a principle more universally active than charity; and, with respect to justice, it ought not to be left to the choice of detached individuals, whether they will do justice or not.—Considering, then, the plan on the ground of justice, it ought to be the act of the whole, growing spontaneously out of the principles of the revolution, and the reputation of it ought to be national and not individual.

A plan upon this principle would benefit the revolution, by the energy that springs from the consciousness of justice. It would multiply also the national resources; for property, like vegetation, increases by offsets. When a young couple begin the world, the difference is exceedingly great, whether they begin with nothing or with fifteen pounds a piece. With this aid they could buy a cow and implements to cultivate a few

acres of land; and instead of becoming burdens upon society, which is always the case, where children are produced faster than they can be fed, would be put in the way of becoming useful and profitable citizens. The national domains also would sell the better if pecuniary aids were provided to cultivate them in small lots.

It is the practice of what has unjustly obtained the name of civilization (and the practice merits not to be called either charity or policy) to make some provision for persons becoming poor and wretched, only at the time they become so. Would it not even as a matter of economy be far better, to advise means to prevent their becoming poor? This can best be done, by making every person when arrived at the age of twenty-one years an inheritor of something to begin with. The rugged face of society, checkered with the extremes of affluence and want, proves that some extraordinary violence has been committed upon it, and calls on justice for redress. The great mass of the poor, in all countries, are become an hereditary race, and it is next to impossible for them to get out of that state of themselves. It ought also to be observed that this mass increases in all countries that are called civilized. More persons fall annually into it, than get out of it.

Though in a plan in which justice and humanity are the foundation-principles, interest ought not to be admitted into the calculation, yet it is always of advantage to the establishment of any plan, to show that it is beneficial as a matter of interest. The success of any proposed plan submitted to public consideration must finally depend on the numbers interested in supporting it, united with the justice of its principles.

The plan here proposed will benefit all, without injuring any. It will consolidate the interest of the republic with that of the individual. To the numerous class dispossessed of their natural inheritance by the system

of landed property, it will be an act of national justice. To persons dying possessed of moderate fortunes, it will operate as a tontine to their children, more beneficial than the sum of money paid into the fund : and it will give to the accumulation of riches a degree of security, that none of the old governments of Europe, now tottering on their foundations, can give.

I do not suppose that more than one family in ten, in any of the countries of Europe, has, when the head of the family dies, a clear property left of five hundred pounds sterling. To all such, the plan is advantageous. That property would pay fifty pounds into the fund, and if there were only two children under age, they would receive fifteen pounds each (thirty pounds) on coming of age, and be entitled to ten pounds a year after fifty. It is from the overgrown acquisition of property that the fund will support itself ; and I know that the possessors of such property in England, though they would eventually be benefited by the protection of nine-tenths of it, will exclaim against the plan. But without entering into any inquiry how they came by that property, let them recollect that they have been the advocates of this war, and that Mr. Pitt has already laid on more new taxes to be raised annually upon the people of England, and that for supporting the despotism of Austria and the Bourbons, against the liberties of France, than would pay annually all the sums proposed in this plan.

I have made the calculations stated in this plan, upon what is called personal, as well as upon landed property. The reason for making it upon land is already explained; and the reason for taking personal property into the calculation is equally well founded, though on a different principle. Land, as before said, is the free gift of the Creator in common to the human race. Personal property is the *effect of society ;* and it is as impossible for an individual to acquire personal property without the aid

of society, as it is for him to make land originally. Separate an individual from society, and give him an island or a continent to possess, and he cannot acquire personal property. He cannot be rich. So inseparably are the means connected with the end, in all cases, that where the former do not exist, the latter cannot be obtained. All accumulation, therefore, of personal property, beyond what a man's own hands produce, is derived to him by living in society ; and he owes on every principle of justice, of gratitude, and of civilization, a part of that accumulation back again to society from whence the whole came. This is putting the matter on a general principle, and perhaps it is best to do so ; for, if we examine the case minutely, it will be found, that the accumulation of personal property is, in many instances, the effect of paying too little for the labor that produced it ; the consequence of which is, that the working hand perishes in old age, and the employer abounds in affluence. It is, perhaps, impossible to proportion exactly the price of labor to the profits it produces ; and it will also be said, as an apology for the injustice, that were a workman to receive an increase of wages daily, he would not save it against old age, nor be much better for it in the interim. Make, then, society the treasurer, to guard it for him, in a common fund ; for it is no reason, that because he might not make a good use of it for himself, that another should take it.

The state of civilization that has prevailed throughout Europe, is as unjust in its principle, as it is horrid in its effects ; and it is the consciousness of this, and the apprehension that such a state cannot continue, when once investigation begins in any country, that makes the possessors of property dread every idea of a revolution. It is the hazard and not the principles of a revolution that retards their progress. This being the case, it is necessary as well for the protection of property, as

for the sake of justice and humanity, to form a system, that whilst it preserves one part of society from wretchedness, shall secure the other from depredation.

The superstitious awe, the enslaving reverence, that formerly surrounded affluence, is passing away in all countries, and leaving the possessor of property to the convulsion of accidents. When wealth and splendor, instead of fascinating the multitude, excite emotions of disgust; when, instead of drawing forth admiration, it is beheld as an insult upon wretchedness; when the ostentatious appearance it makes serves to call the right of it in question, the case of property becomes critical, and it is only in a system of justice that the possessor can contemplate security.

To remove the danger, it is necessary to remove the antipathies, and this can only be done by making property productive of a national blessing, extending to every individual. When the riches of one man above another shall increase the national fund in the same proportion; when it shall be seen that the prosperity of that fund depends on the prosperity of individuals; when the more riches a man acquires, the better it shall be for the general mass; it is then that antipathies will cease, and property be placed on the permanent basis of national interest and protection.

I have no property in France to become subject to the plan I propose. What I have, which is not much, is in the United States of America. But I will pay one hundred pounds sterling towards this fund in France the instant it shall be established; and I will pay the same sum in England whenever a similar establishment shall take place in that country.

A revolution in the state of civilization is the necessary companion of revolutions in the system of government.

If a revolution in any country be from bad to good, or from good to bad, the state of what is called civilization in that country, must be made conformable thereto, to give that revolution effect. Despotic government supports itself by abject civilization, in which debasement of the human mind and wretchedness in the mass of the people, are the chief criterion. Such governments consider man merely as an animal ; that the exercise of the intellectual faculty is not his privilege ; *that he has nothing to do with the laws, but to obey them ;** and they politically depend more upon breaking the spirit of the people by poverty, than they fear enraging it by desperation.

It is a revolution in the state of civilization, that will give perfection to the revolution of France. Already the conviction that government by representation is the true system of government, is spreading itself fast in the world. The reasonableness of it can be seen by all. The justness of it makes itself felt even by its opposers. But when a system of civilization, growing out of that system of government, shall be so organized, that not a man or woman born in the republic, but shall inherit some means of beginning the world, and see before them the certainty of escaping the miseries that under other governments accompany old age, the revolution of France will have an advocate and an ally in the hearts of all nations.

An army of principles will penetrate where an army of soldiers cannot ; it will succeed where diplomatic management would fail ; it is neither the Rhine, the Channel, nor the Ocean, that can arrest its progress : it will march on the horizon of the world, and it will conquer.

* Expression of Horsley, an English bishop, in the English parliament.

MEANS FOR CARRYING THE PROPOSED PLAN INTO EXECUTION, AND TO RENDER IT AT THE SAME TIME CONDUCIVE TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST.

I. Each canton shall elect in its primary assemblies three persons, as commissioners for that canton, who shall take cognizance, and keep a register of all matters happening in that canton, conformable to the charter that shall be established by law, for carrying this plan into execution.

II. The law shall fix the manner in which the property of deceased persons shall be ascertained.

III. When the amount of the property of any deceased person shall be ascertained, the principal heir to that property, or the eldest of the co-heirs if of lawful age, or if under age the person authorized by the will of the deceased to represent him or them, shall give bond to the commissioners of the canton, to pay the said tenth part thereof within the space of one year, in four equal quarterly payments, or sooner, at the choice of the payers. One-half of the whole property shall remain as security until the bond be paid off.

IV. The bond shall be registered in the office of the commissioners of the canton, and the original bonds shall be deposited in the national bank at Paris. The bank shall publish every quarter of a year the amount of the bonds in its possession, and also the bonds that shall have been paid off, or what parts thereof, since the last quarterly publication.

V. The national bank shall issue bank notes upon the security of the bonds in its possession. The notes so issued shall be applied to pay the pensions of aged persons, and the compensations to persons arriving at twenty-one years of age. It is both reasonable and gen-

erous to suppose, that persons not under immediate necessity will suspend their right of drawing on the fund, until it acquire, as it will do, a greater degree of ability. In this case, it is proposed, that an honorary register be kept in each canton of the names of the persons thus suspending that right, at least during the present war.

VI. As the inheritors of property must always take up their bonds in four quarterly payments, or sooner if they choose, there will always be *numeraire* arriving at the bank after the expiration of the first quarter, to exchange for the bank notes that shall be brought in.

VII. The bank notes being thus put in circulation, upon the best of all possible security, that of actual property, to more than four times the amount of the bonds upon which the notes are issued, and with *numeraire* continually arriving at the bank to exchange or pay them off whenever they shall be presented for that purpose, they will acquire a permanent value in all parts of the republic. They can therefore be received in payment of taxes or *emprunts* equal to *numeraire*, because the government can always receive *numeraire* for them at the bank.

VIII. It will be necessary that the payments of the ten per cent. be made in *numeraire*, for the first year from the establishment of the plan. But after the expiration of the first year, the inheritors of property may pay ten per cent. either in bank notes issued upon the fund, or in *numeraire*. If the payments be in *numeraire*, it will lie as a deposit at the bank, to be exchanged for a quantity of notes equal to that amount; and if in notes issued upon the fund, it will cause a demand upon the fund, equal thereto; and thus the operation of the plan will create means to carry itself into execution.

THOMAS PAINE.

To the Sheriff of the County of Sussex,

or, the Gentleman who shall preside at the meeting to be held at Lewes, July 4.

London, June 30, 1792.

SIR: I have seen in the Lewes newspapers of June 25, an advertisement, signed by sundry persons and also by the sheriff, for holding a meeting at the Town Hall of Lewes, for the purpose, as the advertisement states, of presenting an address on the late proclamation for suppressing writings, books, &c. And as I conceive that a certain publication of mine, entitled *Rights of Man*, in which, among other things, the enormous increase of taxes, placemen and pensioners is shown to be unnecessary and oppressive, *is the particular writing alluded to in the said publication;* I request the sheriff, or in his absence, whoever shall preside at the meeting, or any other person, to read this letter publicly to the company who shall assemble in consequence of that advertisement.

Gentlemen—It is now upwards of eighteen years since I was a resident inhabitant of the town of Lewes. My situation among you, as an officer of the revenue for more than six years, enabled me to see into the numerous and various distresses which the weight of taxes, even at that time, occasioned; and feeling, as I then did,

and as it is natural for me to do, for the hard condition of others, it is with pleasure I can declare, and every person then under my survey, and now living, can witness the exceeding candor and even tenderness with which that part of the duty that fell to my share was executed. The name of *Thomas Paine* is not to be found in the records of the Lewes' justices in any one act of contention with, or severity of any kind whatever, towards the persons whom he surveyed, either in the town or in the country; of this, *Mr. Fuller* and *Mr. Shelley*, who will probably attend the meeting, can, if they please, give full testimony. It is, however, not in their power to contradict it.

Having thus indulged myself in recollecting a place where I formerly had and even now have many friends, rich and poor, and most probably some enemies, I proceed to the more important purport of my letter.

Since my departure from Lewes, fortune or providence has thrown me into a line of action which my first setting out into life could not possibly have suggested to me.

I have seen the fine and fertile country of America ravaged and deluged in blood, and the taxes of England enormously increased and multiplied in consequence thereof; and this, in a great measure, by the instigation of the same class of placemen, pensioners and court dependents, who are now promoting addresses throughout England on the present *unintelligible* proclamation.

I have also seen a system of government rise up in that country free from corruption, and now administered over an extent of territory ten times as large as England, *for less expense than the pensions alone in England amount to;* and under which more freedom is enjoyed and a more happy state of society is preserved, and a more general prosperity is promoted, than under any other system of government now existing in the world. Knowing, as I do, the things I now declare, I should reproach

myself with want of duty and affection to mankind, were I not in the most undismayed manner to publish them, as it were, on the house-tops, for the good of others.

Having thus glanced at what has passed within my knowledge since my leaving Lewes, I come to the subject more immediately before the meeting now present.

Mr. Edmund Burke, who, as I shall show in a future publication, has lived a concealed pensioner, at the expense of the public, of fifteen hundred pounds per annum, for about ten years last past, published a book the winter before last, in open violation of the principles of liberty, and for which he was applauded by that class of men *who are now promoting addresses.* Soon after his book appeared, I published the first part of the work, entitled *Rights of Man*, as an answer thereto, and had the happiness of receiving the public thanks of several bodies of men, and of numerous individuals of the best character, of every denomination in religion and of every rank of life—placemen and pensioners excepted.

In February last I published the second part of *Rights of Man*, and as it met with still greater approbation from the true friends of national freedom, and went deeper into the system of government and exposed the abuses of it, more than had been done in the first part, it consequently excited an alarm among all those who, insensible of the burthen of taxes, which the general mass of the people sustain, are living in luxury and indolence, and hunting after court preferments, sinecure places and pensions, either for themselves or for their family connections.

I have shown in that work, that the taxes may be reduced at least *six millions*, and even then, the expenses of government in England would be twenty times greater than they are in the country I have already spoken of. That taxes may be entirely taken off from the poor, by remitting to them in money at the rate of between *three*

and four pounds per head per annum, for the education and bringing up of the children of the poor families, who are computed at one-third of the whole nation, and *six pounds* per annum to all poor persons, decayed tradesmen or others, from the age of fifty until sixty, and *ten pounds* per annum from after sixty. And that in consequence of this allowance, to be paid out of the surplus taxes, the poor rates would become unnecessary, and that it is better to apply the surplus taxes to these beneficent purposes, *than to waste them on idle and profligate courtiers, placemen and pensioners.*

These, gentlemen, are a part of the plans and principles contained in the work which this meeting is now called upon, in an indirect manner, to vote an address against, and brand with the name of *wicked* and *seditious*. But that the work may speak for itself, I request leave to close this part of my letter with an extract therefrom, in the following words:

"By the operation of this plan, the poor-laws, those instruments of civil torture, will be superseded, and the wasteful expense of litigation prevented. The hearts of the humane will not be shocked by ragged and hungry children, and persons of seventy and eighty years of age begging for bread. The dying poor will not be dragged from place to place to breathe their last, as a reprisal of parish upon parish. Widows will have a maintenance for their children, and not be carted away, on the death of their husbands, like culprits and criminals; and children will no longer be considered as increasing the distresses of their parents. The haunts of the wretched will be known, because it will be to their advantage, and the number of petty crimes, the offspring of poverty and distress, will be lessened. The poor, as well as the rich, will then be interested in the support of government, and the cause and apprehensions of riots and tumults will cease. Ye who sit in ease, and solace your-

selves in plenty, and such there are in Turkey and Russia, as well as in England, and who say to yourselves, *Are we not well off?* Have ye thought of these things? When ye do, ye will cease to speak and feel for yourselves alone."—*Rights of Man*, Part II., p. 247.

Gentlemen, I have now stated to you such matters as appear necessary to me to offer to the consideration of the meeting. I have no other interest in what I am doing, nor in writing you this letter, than the interest of the *heart.* I consider the proposed address as calculated to give countenance to placemen, pensioners, enormous taxation and corruption. Many of you will recollect, that whilst I resided among you, there was not a man more firm and open in supporting the principles of liberty than myself, and I still pursue, and ever will, the same path.

I have, gentlemen, only one request to make, which is—that those who have called the meeting will speak *out* and say, whether in the address they are going to present against publications, which the proclamation calls wicked, "they mean the work entitled *Rights of Man*, or whether they do not?"

I am, gentlemen,

With sincere wishes for your happiness,

Your friend and servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO SIR ARCHIBALD MACDONALD,

ATTORNEY GENERAL.

LETTER THE FIRST.

SIR: Though I have some reason for believing that you were not the orginal promoter or encourager of the prosecution commenced against the work, entitled *Rights of Man*, either as that prosecution is intended to affect the author, the publisher, or the public; yet as you appear the official person therein, I address this letter to you, not as Sir Archibald Macdonald, but as Attorney General.

You began by a prosecution against the publisher, Jordan, and the reason assigned by Mr. Secretary Dundas, in the House of Commons, in the debate on the proclamation, May 25, for taking that measure was, he said, because Mr. Paine could not be found, or words to that effect. Mr. Paine, sir, so far from secreting himself, never went a step out of his way, nor in the least instance varied from his usual conduct, to avoid any measure you might choose to adopt with respect to him. It is on the purity of his heart, and the universal utility of the principles and plans which his writings contain, that he rests the issue; and he will not dishonor it by any kind of subterfuge. The apartments which he occupied at the time of writing the work last winter, he has continued to occupy to the present hour, and the

solicitors of the prosecution knew where to find him ; of which there is a proof in their own office, as far back as the 21st of May, and also in the office of my own attorney.

But admitting, for the sake of the case, that the reason for proceeding against the publisher was, as Mr. Dundas stated, that Mr. Paine could not be found, that reason can now exist no longer.

The instant that I was informed that an information was preparing to be filed against me as the author of, I believe, one of the most useful and benevolent books ever offered to mankind, I directed my attorney to put in an appearance ; and as I shall meet the prosecution fully and fairly, and with a good and upright conscience, I have a right to expect that no act of littleness will be made use of on the part of the prosecution towards influencing the future issue with respect to the author. This expression may, perhaps, appear obscure to you, but I am in the possession of some matters which serve to show that the action against the publisher is not intended to be a *real* action. If, therefore, any persons concerned in the prosecution have found their cause so weak, as to make it appear convenient to them to enter into a negotiation with the publisher, whether for the purpose of his submitting to a verdict, and to make use of the verdict so obtained as a circumstance, by way of precedent, on a future trial against myself ; or for any other purpose not fully made known to me ; if, I say, I have cause to suspect this to be the case, I shall most certainly withdraw the defence I should otherwise have made, or promoted, on his (the publisher's) behalf, and leave the negotiators to themselves, and shall reserve the whole of the defence for the *real* trial.

But, sir, for the purpose of conducting the matter with at least the appearance of fairness and openness, that shall justify itself before the public, whose cause it really is (for it is the right of public discussion and in-

vestigation that is questioned), I have to propose to you to cease the prosecution against the publisher; and as the reason or pretext can no longer exist for continuing it against him because Mr. Paine could not be found, that you would direct the whole process against me, with whom the prosecuting party will not find it possible to enter into any private negotiation.

I will do the cause full justice, as well for the sake of the nation, as for my own reputation.

Another reason for discontinuing the process against the publisher is, because it can amount to nothing. First, because a jury in London cannot decide upon the fact of publishing beyond the limits of the jurisdiction of London, and therefore the work may be republished over and over again in every county in the nation, and every case must have a separate process; and by the time that three or four hundred prosecutions have been had, the eyes of the nation will then be fully open to see that the work in question contains a plan the best calculated to root out all the abuses of government, and to lessen the taxes of the nation upwards of *six millions annually.*

Secondly. Because, though the gentlemen of London may be very expert in understanding their particular professions and occupations, and how to make business contracts with government beneficial to themselves as individuals, the rest of the nation may not be disposed to consider them sufficiently qualified nor authorized to determine for the whole nation on plans of reform, and on systems and principles of government. This would be in effect to erect a jury into a national convention, instead of electing a convention, and to lay a precedent for the probable tyranny of juries, under the pretence of supporting their rights.

That the possibility always exists of packing juries will not be denied; and, therefore, in all cases where

government is the prosecutor, more especially in those where the right of public discussion and investigation of principles and systems of government is attempted to be suppressed by a verdict, or in those where the object of the work that is prosecuted is the reform of abuse and the abolition of sinecure places and pensions, in all these cases the verdict of a jury will itself become a subject of discussion; and therefore, it furnishes an additional reason for discontinuing the prosecution against the publisher, more especially as it is not a secret that there has been a negotiation with him for secret purposes, and for proceeding against me only. I shall make a much stronger defence than what I believe the Treasury Solicitor's agreement with him will permit him to do.

I believe that Mr. Burke, finding himself defeated, and not being able to make any answer to the *Rights of Man*, has been one of the promoters of this prosecution; and I shall return the compliment to him by showing, in a future publication, that he has been a masked pensioner at £1,500 per annum for about ten years.

Thus it is that the public money is wasted, and the dread of public investigation is produced.

I am, sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL,

On the Prosecution Against the Second Part of "Rights of Man."

LETTER THE SECOND.

Paris, Nov., 11th year of the Republic.

SIR: As there can be no personal resentment between two strangers, I write this letter to you, as a man against whom I have no animosity.

You have, as Attorney General, commenced a prosecution against me, as the author of *Rights of Man.* Had not my duty, in consequence of my being elected a member of the National Convention of France, called me from England, I should have staid to have contested the injustice of that prosecution; not upon my own account, for I cared not about the prosecution, but to have defended the principles I had advanced in the work.

The duty I am now engaged in is of too much importance to permit me to trouble myself about your prosecution: when I have leisure, I shall have no objection to meet you on that ground; but as I now stand, whether you go on with the prosecution, or whether you do not, or whether you obtain a verdict, or not, is a matter of the most perfect indifference to me as an individual. If you obtain one (which you are welcome to, if you can get it), it cannot affect me either in person, property or reputation, otherwise than to increase the latter; and with respect to yourself, it is as consistent that you obtain a verdict against the man in the moon as against me: neither do I see how you can continue

the prosecution against me, as you would have done against one of *your own people* who had absented himself because he was prosecuted: what passed at Dover proves that my departure from England was no secret.

My necessary absence from your country now, in consequence of my duty here, affords the opportunity of knowing whether the prosecution was intended against Thomas Paine, or against the rights of the people of England to investigate systems and principles of government; for as I cannot now be the object of the prosecution, the going on with the prosecution will show that something else was the object, and that something else can be no other than the people of England, for it is against *their rights*, and not against me, that a verdict or sentence can operate, if it can operate at all. Be then so candid as to tell the jury (if you choose to continue the process), whom it is you are prosecuting, and on whom it is that the verdict is to fall.

But I have other reasons than those I have mentioned for writing you this letter; and, however you may choose to interpret them, they proceed from a good heart. The time, sir, is becoming too serious to play with court prosecutions, and sport with national rights. The terrible examples that have taken place here, upon men who less than a year ago thought themselves as secure as any prosecuting judge, jury, or attorney general can now do in England, ought to have some weight with men in your situation. That the government of England is as great, if not the greatest, perfection of fraud and corruption that ever took place since governments began, is what you cannot be a stranger to, unless the constant habit of seeing it has blinded your senses; but though you may not choose to see it, the people are seeing it very fast, and the progress is beyond what you may choose to believe. Is it possible that you or I can believe, or that reason can make any other man believe,

that the capacity of such a man as Mr. Guelph or any of his profligate sons is necessary to the government of a nation? I speak to you as one man ought to speak to another; and I know also, that I speak what other people are beginning to think.

That you cannot obtain a verdict (and if you do, it will signify nothing), without packing a jury (and we both know that such tricks are practised), is what I have very good reason to believe. I have gone into coffee-houses and places where I was unknown, on purpose to learn the currency of opinion, and I never yet saw any company of twelve men that condemned the book; but I have often found a greater number than twelve approving it, and this I think is a fair way of collecting the natural currency of opinion. Do not then, sir, be the instrument of drawing twelve men into a situation that may be injurious to them afterwards. I do not speak this from policy, but from benevolence; but if you choose to go on with the process, I make it my request to you that you will read this letter in court, after which the judge and the jury may do as they please. As I do not consider myself the object of the prosecution, neither can I be affected by the issue, one way or the other, I shall, though a foreigner in your country, subscribe as much money as any other man towards supporting the right of the nation against the prosecution; and it is for this purpose only that I shall do it.

THOMAS PAINE.

As I have not time to copy letters, you will excuse the corrections.

P. S. I intended, had I staid in England, to have published the information, with my remarks upon it, before the trial came on; but as I am otherwise engaged, I reserve myself till the trial is over, when I shall reply fully to every thing you shall advance.